

what Queensland has done. Let me read this extract from the "West Australian"—

Authorities in Brisbane estimate that the Queensland crop of tomatoes this season will total 250,000 cases, of which 80,000 are to be pulped and the balance sold fresh. The Government is backing pulping operations to the extent of £8,000. From the whole of the tomato pool operations it is expected that £50,000 will be realised.

All our canned tomatoes and tomato sauces are brought over here from the Eastern States. Bendigo, I think, is the biggest supplier, and yet this State is second to no other State in Australia with regard to the production of the tomato. As a matter of fact, I doubt whether there are better places in the Commonwealth for the growth of the tomato than Geraldton in the north and any part of the South-West. With regard to condensed milk, all that comes from the Eastern States. In Victoria this commodity is not prepared in one district alone; there are factories all over that State. It was generally thought that Warrnambool exported potatoes and nothing else. We have it on the authority of the Press that Warrnambool, a little while back, in the course of a week exported 40,000 cases of Nestle's milk for Eastern ports by one steamer and 30,000 cases for Japan and Indo-China ports by another steamer. This proves that Warrnambool, if it ever did, does not now entirely depend on potato production. I contend that if the group settlers, when they cease to draw their 10s. a day allowance, get down to work in earnest, there is no reason why they should not make good. At the same time I do not see why they should not be given a Commonwealth or a State bonus.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: It cannot be done under the Constitution.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Western Australia is suffering from the opposition which comes from the Eastern States. An hon. member earlier in the debate referred to the State Improvement Works and other trading concerns. So far as I can see, if there is going to be continued opposition to factories starting in this State, there will be nothing else for it but to go in for further State industries, because it will be possible by such means only to fight vested interests from the other side of Australia, which vested interests are now strangling our secondary industries. I am not altogether in favour of State enterprises, but at the same time something should be done to destroy unfair competition and dumping which is taking place.

Hon. J. Cornell: Everything will come in time when you increase the population.

Hon. A. BURVILL: We are suffering severely from the Massey Greene tariff. In 1921 this meant £5 18s. 6d. per head, equivalent to £30 per family, and last year £5 0s. 3½d. per head, or £25 per family. Western Australia is the biggest immigration State just now; we have the greatest area of vacant land and can do more for new arrivals than any other State of Australia. We shall for a

long time yet be putting more money into Eastern States coffers through the tariff. An hon. member described us as a junior partner in the Federation. I think sometimes that we are only a very poor relation; indeed, I have thought we were worse than that, that we were simply Lazarus.

On motion by Hon. F. E. S. Willmott, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 8.15 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 21st August, 1923.*

|                                     | PAGE |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Questions: Peel Estate ... ..       | 344  |
| Old Men's Home ... ..               | 344  |
| Road traffic, piping ... ..         | 345  |
| Surveyors, unemployed ... ..        | 345  |
| Esperance-Northwards railway ... .. | 345  |
| Address-in-reply, tenth day ... ..  | 345  |

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTION—PEEL ESTATE.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been called to an address delivered under the auspices of the Fremantle Business Men's Association regarding the failure of Peel Estate settlers? 2, Is the statement correct?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, As to the quality of the land, yes. Otherwise, thoroughly competent officials have been in charge of operations on Peel Estate, viz., Mr. E. M. Downs, Agricultural Adviser; his assistant, Mr. Tonkin; and the Agricultural Bank Inspector, Mr. Rhodes. The policy is well defined—dairying and growth of fodder and root crops. Inexperienced men have not failed for lack of advice. A few have proved unsuitable, as is inevitable in dealing with large numbers. The State can guarantee the land—it cannot guarantee the men.

### QUESTION—OLD MEN'S HOME.

Mr. J. THOMSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, With reference to the findings of the Commission of inquiry into the management of the Old Men's Home held in 1916, do the Government intend to put the recom-

mendations contained in this report into operation? 2, If not, why not? 3, Will he lay the papers, containing the findings of the commission of inquiry, on the Table of the House?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, The report by the late Mr. Jull was considered by the Government of the day and his recommendation substantially agreed to. The Government did not approve the proposal to place the hospital ward and the Home under the direct control of a medical superintendent; but the situation was met by appointing a local visiting medical officer, who is available night and day in emergency; and by bringing the institution under the control of the Medical Department. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Yes.

#### QUESTION—ROAD TRAFFIC, PIPING.

Mr. J. THOMSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, How many lengths and total weight of piping have been taken towards Fremantle by road during the past twelve months? 2, How many ton miles does this represent? 3, How many miles backwards and forwards have been travelled by motor lorry to do this work? 4, How many miles have been travelled by departmental lorry and how many by hired lorry; the total cost of each? 5, Would it not have been more economical to have sent these pipes by rail since they are being laid down close to the railway? 6, How does he make this action coincide with a recent reply to a deputation by the Premier that he did not favour encouragement of road traffic in opposition to the railways?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, 1,011 pipes—1,066 tons. 2, 6,396. 3, 1,727. 4, By Department 525 miles, cost £183; by contractor 1,202 miles, cost £401. These figures are for forward journey only. Contractor has backloading (merchandise from Fremantle to Perth), and Department has backloading from State Implement Works to Perth. 5, No, as economy has to be considered and extra handling avoided. 6, Carriage by rail is availed of wherever it can be fitted into the job in hand.

#### QUESTION—SURVEYORS UNEMPLOYED.

Capt. CARTER asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that there are certain surveyors at present out of employment in Western Australia? 2, If so, is this because the Surveyor General has not laid down a sufficient programme of work in advance to keep the various camps engaged?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. The temporary stoppage of surveys in the extreme South-West is due to the exceptionally heavy rainfall, rendering work impossible for the time being.

#### QUESTION—ESPERANCE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY.

Hon. T. WALKER asked the Premier: 1, Has he made inquiries as to the rainfall in the area between Seaddan and Norseman? 2, Has he arrived at any conclusion as to the wisdom and urgency of joining the terminus of the Esperance Northward line with the State railway system at Norseman?

The PREMIER replied. 1, Yes. 2, No.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

##### Tenth Day.

Debate resumed from the 16th August.

Mr. STUBBS (Wagin) [4.37]: The concluding paragraph of His Excellency's Speech contains the most important item—

My advisers, believing that finance and development are the matters of vital importance to the State, will ask Parliament to devote the greater part of this session to their consideration.

If the Premier and his Ministers are sincere, as I believe they were when they put these words into the Speech, I venture to say all sections of this House will endeavour to give them the benefit of their experience, and help them to bring the State back to what it was in pre-war days as regards expenditure and revenue. Our deficit amounts to about £6,000,000. Who can deny that the financial position is serious. If every unit in this House is not prepared to assist the Government to bring about a more economical method of living than has been the case during the last eight or nine years we shall be called to account on the hustings. As a business man of 28½ years' experience in this State I view with alarm, just as every member must do, the facts that stare us in the face every year when the Budget is brought down. It is idle for any party in the House to blame the Government or any previous administration for the present position. The war was responsible for the first step that was taken to build up the deficit. No Government can control the war expenditure, and its effect resulting in so many men leaving the State to fight for freedom and liberty. Some 26 years ago Western Australia, in the eyes of 90 per cent. of the people of the Eastern States, was "a large tract of land with great sandy deserts," and this was written across the centre of it and displayed on the maps in all the school buildings. Even the hardy band of settlers who resided in Western Australia in these days—not even excepting the optimistic John Forrest—little dreamed what the discovery of gold would mean to the State. At the time gold was first discovered here Victoria was in a very parlous condition as a result of five successive years of drought. I remember seeing large numbers of travellers along the track leading to the city, and wagons drawn by lean horses coming from the mallee and other portions of Northern Victoria, every man thinking he could do better

than he had been doing for the previous five years, when the seed scarcely came above the ground. The discovery of gold in Western Australia caused the people of Victoria to look towards us. Those who came here never regretted the step, because they were able to send back to Victoria hundreds of thousands of pounds every year to keep their homes going. For ten years after the opening up of the goldfields the wonderful amount of wealth produced from our mines opened the eyes of the world to this country. I say, as an agricultural member, it is up to everyone sitting on this side of the House to evolve some scheme for the resuscitation of the gold mining industry. I was deeply interested in the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier's reply thereto. I also heard the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Cunningham) deliver a most interesting speech on the mining industry, and make many suggestions as to how it could be stimulated. Is there any man pessimistic enough to say that gold mining in this State is dead? When conversing a few days ago with one of the most highly respected mine managers on the Golden Mile regarding the present depression in the industry, I learned from him, in reply to my question as to how it was that mining had declined in so remarkable a manner during the past eight or ten years, that there were several factors, one of which was the high cost of production. He also made the astonishing statement that Western Australia's proportion of gold extracted is ton for ton the highest in the world at present.

Mr. McCallum: That is the average?

Mr. STUBBS: Yes, the average, ton for ton treated. The gentleman with whom I was speaking is the general manager of one of the largest mines on the Golden Mile, a man of vast experience and a capable man too. He said there were two or three factors governing the position. I said: "Some people consider that you do not get half as much work out of the men as you used to." He replied: "To a certain point, that is right. In the old days, when I was a boy"—he gained his experience in the old mining district of Bendigo in Victoria—"all the young fellows had to do a certain amount of work on the surface, so as to get the hang of mining operations, before being allowed underground." The conditions prevailing then and now are totally different. This gentleman went further and said, "I would not like to say that half of the men do not do a fair day's work, because I believe the physical condition of many men on the mines to-day is not nearly as good as it was among the older and more experienced miners of the early days."

Mr. Corboy: Much of that is due to the fact that those men have been working in the industry.

Mr. STUBBS: That brings me to another point. Last session a Bill was presented to Parliament which passed through both Chambers. I regret the Minister for Mines has not been able to put into operation those provi-

sions relating to miners' phthisis. If anyone went occasionally to the Wooreloo Sanatorium and saw the effects of the ravages of miners' complaint, as illustrated in the patients there, he would agree with me that something should be done to assist those individuals. It is useless to lock the door of the stable after the horse has gone. Twenty-five years ago I held a number of shares in mines on the Golden Mile. Out of some, I did very well; out of others, I did very badly. When I took stock at the end of a few years, I found that I was about £2,000 down. I gave up dealing in shares and carried on a business in Perth concerning which I knew something. I dare say that the shares I sold have changed hands fifty times since I disposed of them. The argument is put up to-day, why do not some of the wealthy men who made their money out of mining, do something to relieve the men who have contracted the terrible disease of miners' phthisis? If a law had been placed on the statute-book 25 or 30 years ago, compelling mining companies who were making huge profits, to place a proportion in a reserve fund for such a purpose, it would have been a splendid move. The Government could have been asked to contribute a third towards the fund to relieve men suffering from miners' complaint. It is no use talking about such a scheme now, because the dividends paid away in those days have been disbursed and the people who reaped the large dividends then are probably not concerned with mining now and perhaps do not own a share. To talk about taxing the mining companies now is futile for such a move would serve no good purpose. The Minister for Mines made the statement at Kalgoorlie recently that the Government intended to afford the mining industry some relief by supplying the companies with cheaper water. When I mentioned that point to the mine manager I have referred to, he said that such a step would be one in the right direction and would be welcomed by a number of companies who were now hanging in the balance and who, unless something were done to assist them, would be compelled to close down. If the Minister for Mines can assist in the direction he has indicated, the House will be with him. Even if we have to borrow a couple of hundred thousand pounds to assist the mining industry, we should do so. We could send out prospecting parties, properly equipped and under adequate control, in order to discover further wealth which I feel sure exists in many parts of Western Australia. The mining industry made Western Australia what it is to-day and it is up to the House to help the Government in any direction that will prevent the industry from waning and, on the other hand, to make it flourish as it did 20 years or so ago. Surely there is more than one Golden Mile in Western Australia! Some time ago I was a member of a Parliamentary party who visited the Kimberley districts. During the course of that trip we travelled for mile upon mile through ranges. I am not a geologist, but I have

travelled through most of the goldfields of the world. I have no hesitation, therefore, in saying that at Hall's Creek—a place where in the early days 1,000 or 1,500 men were camped on alluvial gold diggings, many of them making money—there are numerous outcrops of quartz reefs which, I believe, have never had a pick in them. Can some scheme not be devised whereby such an area can be explored and tested? I trust the Minister for Mines will take up this matter with the geologists attached to the Mines Department and see if we cannot locate a mine that will bring prosperity back to the industry and give a fillip once more to the wonderful goldfields. What are those wealthy companies, with offices in Perth, who made thousands and thousands of pounds during the war, doing for the industry? How many of those firms have spent £5 or £10 in sending out prospecting parties?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Very few.

Mr. STUBBS: If a campaign were started regarding the mining industry, it would do good. It is worth trying. I feel keenly the position many of the towns on the goldfields are in to-day. The Leader of the Opposition pointed out in his speech on the Address-in-reply that there were many families on the goldfields whose men folk were out of work. If those men leave the State we will lose a fine type of citizen, and we will lose them if we do not do something for them. They will drift to the Eastern States. Already we have lost far too many.

Mr. Davies: Why do you say they drift to the Eastern States?

Mr. STUBBS: I am told that many of them have already gone to the Eastern States.

Mr. Davies: Is mining better there?

Mr. STUBBS: The position is that the industry here is in an unsatisfactory state and conditions are better over there. Unless we do something to make the mining industry more profitable than it is now, it is only a question of time when a number of mines that are now working will close down. I spoke with one gentleman interested in this question who had no axe to grind, and he impressed me with the seriousness of the position. It is for the House to assist the Government in anything they may do to advance the industry. I believe the Government are sincere. The Minister for Mines has been connected with mining all his life. He came from a mining town and worked in connection with the mining industry as a boy. I appeal to the Minister to do his best during the next few months to give an impetus to the mining industry here. With the advent to Western Australia of people from all parts of the world 25 years ago, the greatest attention was paid to mining. Very little agriculture was carried on. We imported 95 per cent. of the flour and wheat used in the State in those days; it came from Victoria or South Australia, and was landed at Fremantle. Last year we sent away between 11 and 12 million bushels of wheat. The development of the agricultural industry of

Western Australia reads like a romance. I am pleased to remind the House that the present Premier took a hand in the development of the agricultural belts of the State. He has done well. He has now embarked upon a migration scheme. One has to travel to gain knowledge of what is best for one's own country and as the result of his recent visit to other parts of the world, the Premier has doubtless become impressed with the necessity to increase our population. When we see our vast empty spaces and remember that there are countries within three or four days' sail of our State, where they are teeming millions, it makes us realise that if we do not develop Western Australia with a white population, another country not far away will develop it for us, whether we like it or not. Sir James Mitchell is working along right lines in his endeavour to bring a desirable type of migrant to Western Australia. The scheme upon which he has embarked involves tremendous expenditure, so that we can develop the South-West. I agree with him that in the South-West the country is rich. It reminds me of the Gippsland area in Victoria. It has to be remembered, however, that it took three or four generations to bring the Gippsland country into subjection, earn interest on the money involved in its development and attain its present standard of production. In the expenditure of these vast sums of money we must remember the position along the Great Southern railway. I am not parochial in dealing with this question because my argument applies to all the country from Pingelly to Katanning. That area embraces a tract of country that can settle twenty times the present population. There is a splendid rainfall and the climate is second to none in the State.

Mr. Underwood: What about Kendenup?

Mr. STUBBS: I do not know so much about Kendenup for I have not been there so often, nor have I the experience regarding Kendenup that I have regarding the Great Southern. I am speaking about country I have assisted to develop and know what can be done there. There is a property close to the Great Southern railway containing about 25,000 acres, practically all freehold. Of that area from 9,000 to 10,000 acres are cleared and the rest has been rung for so many years that a few shillings per acre would suffice to clear it too. That area could carry 25 families when one family is residing now, and no part of that property is more than seven or eight miles from an existing line. It can be bought by the Government for 35s. an acre. This 25,000 acres of country was taken up some years ago. It has carried about 10,000 sheep and between 2,000 and 3,000 acres of crop every year for the last ten years to my knowledge.

Mr. Pickering: And you can get it for 35s.?

Mr. STUBBS: Yes, and it has been turned down by the Government. It would be possible quite easily to settle 25 families

on that property at the present time. If hon. members will accompany me in groups I will take them to the district during week ends and show them that what I have told them is perfectly true. They can visit the property at the expense of the town of Wagin and the member for the district. I guarantee that I would have no difficulty in convincing them that it would pay the Government to acquire the property for group settlement purposes.

The Minister for Agriculture: I would like to take hon. members through my electorate also.

Mr. STUBBS: It is costing between £15 and £20 an acre to clear Manjimup country. Why should we pay such a large amount when it is possible to secure an area such as that which I have described, at 35s. an acre? It is appalling when we think that we are still sending hundreds of thousands of pounds out of the State annually for the purchase of butter. Let me read a telegram which I received a few minutes ago—

Mr. Underwood interjected.

Mr. STUBBS: I do not very often take up the time of the House, and I would like to be permitted to speak without being interrupted by the hon. member. I feel very keenly the position the State is in at the present time, and having information at my disposal which I think should be disclosed, I would like to be permitted to give it for the information of hon. members without interruption. The enormous sum of money that is sent out of the State annually for butter is a very serious item. It is entirely lost to the State.

Mr. Underwood: Why do we not make butter?

Mr. STUBBS: If the hon. member will not interrupt I will show him that it ought to be possible to stop the drift. The firm of Malcolm & Co. for the past seven or eight years have been the Wagin agents of the Narrogin Butter Factory, and all the cream that is produced east and west of Wagin goes into Malcolm's store, is graded there, and is sent on to the Narrogin Butter Factory. Mr. Malcolm wired to me to-day, "Wagin electorate produces approximately 23 tons of butter annually." That does not seem very much, but let me remind hon. members that four or five years ago the production from this particular factory was not more than a ton per annum. At 2s. per lb. the 23 tons of butter are valued at £5,000. If all the agricultural districts in Western Australia turned out £5,000 worth of butter annually, what a different position the State would be in!

Mr. Underwood interjected.

Mr. STUBBS: Will the member for Pilbara listen to this: Within two miles of Wagin there is a farm of 350 acres consisting of what is supposed to be second class land. What does the hon. member think the owner of that farm is doing with it? He is carrying 50 head of stud cattle. He employs three men all the year round, and he has received first prize for the best cream test in the State. His cattle are Jerseys and they

are high-class. The head of stock works out at one to every seven acres, and that, too, on second-class land. I can assure the House that there are tens of thousands of acres of better land than that in the district. Hon. members may wonder how the owner of that property has succeeded in this way. The process is simple. He grows lucerno and other fodder grasses and makes liberal use of silos which he has constructed. These silos are of reinforced concrete and each carries from 80 to 100 tons and cost not more than £100 per silo to build. I suggest that the Government should spend a fairly large sum of money in the purchase of a good breed of cattle to sell to the settlers. I will undertake to say that there are hundreds of people in my district who will gladly buy the stock and pay for them without any difficulty, because they are beginning to get on their feet, and they now have more grass than can be eaten by the stock their farms are carrying. Moreover, if the group settlements in the South-West are going to be the success which we all hope and believe, what is to hinder the extension of the system in localities such as the one I have been describing? The proposal I have submitted could well be carried out hand in hand with that of the South-West. I do not wish hon. members to imagine for a moment that I have anything against the South-West country. I know every inch of it, and I believe it will eventually produce a great deal of wealth. But the process is going to be costly. The scheme I am advocating will not be nearly so costly and it will certainly be much more rapid. I assure hon. members likewise that I do not hold a brief for the gentleman whose property I consider should be acquired by the State. He is a wealthy man without a family and is patriotic enough to let the property be secured by the Government at a reasonable price. If he keeps it for another five years it will be worth three times what he is asking to-day.

Mr. Underwood interjected.

Mr. STUBBS: If the hon. member does not care to listen to what I have to say, let him get out.

Mr. SPEAKER. Order! The hon. member is not in order in suggesting that another member should leave the Chamber.

Mr. STUBBS: I only ask that the hon. member be requested to refrain from interrupting. I never interrupt him when he is speaking. I would like the Government to consider the advisableness of negotiating for that property, and if they cannot see their way to pay in cash, the owner I believe would accept bonds. In that event I am sure that, long before the bonds matured, the property would have paid for itself.

Hon. T. Walker: Why does he want to sell so cheaply?

Mr. STUBBS: That is the value he has set upon his property. I had a farm which adjoined that particular one. It consisted of 8,000 acres and it was my best asset, but, unfortunately, I had to sell it to meet other engagements. I sold it for about £2 an acre

and the man who purchased it, after having held it for a few weeks disposed of it again for £2 10s. an acre. I can safely declare that to-day some of that land is worth £5 an acre. I remember the member for Pingelly (Mr. Hickmott) telling the House the other night what was being done by way of irrigation on the Murray, and that no less than from £150 to £200 per acre had to be paid for vine growing land there to-day. In the Great Southern there are tens of thousands of acres of vine growing land equal to that of Mildura, which does not need to be irrigated and which can be secured for £15 to £20 per acre. Are the Government sincere in the statement they have made that vine growing is to receive their earnest attention? I heard the other night the Minister for Agriculture interject that the Government were spending about £200,000 in the Swan Valley. I believe a lot of the land there has cost £30 and £40 an acre. I sincerely trust that interest and sinking fund will be earned by that property.

The Minister for Agriculture: I guarantee that currants will grow just as well in my district as they will in the Wagin district.

Mr. Underwood: They will grow in my back yard.

Mr. STUBBS: That is a nice interjection to come from the Minister. I say that the Government are asleep in regard to many matters of importance.

Opposition Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. STUBBS: If the hands of members of Parliament are going to be tied, and they are not to be permitted to criticise without a charge being made of being likely to benefit, we might just as well permit half a dozen Ministers to run the country. It is the function of Parliament to assist Ministers and to offer constructive criticism. If that criticism is not taken in the spirit in which it is offered, I shall have nothing more to say. I owe a responsibility to my electors, and it is due to the Government to stop the drift of money to the Eastern States. If it cost £50,000 to get a decent lot of cattle across, it would pay the Government.

Mr. Pickering: Where are you going to get them?

Mr. STUBBS: The fruit industry is in a very parlous condition. The Premier was optimistic enough to say that 300,000 or 400,000 cases of fruit sent to England had realised high prices.

The Minister for Agriculture: He did not say that; he spoke of the quality of the fruit.

Mr. STUBBS: Then I stand corrected. The majority of fruitgrowers have had a most disastrous time and it is questionable whether a number of them will be able to carry on. During my trip to Singapore the doctor of the ship told me he had put all his capital into an orchard at Mt. Barker. He said the yield had increased from 300 cases of apples five or six years ago to 2,000 cases last year, but the crop had not realised the value of the cases which contained the fruit. He was quite down-hearted as to the future. I visited

the East recently—the Leader of the Opposition and other members who made the trip can bear out what I am going to say—and I discovered that a majority of the people are not in a position to buy large quantities of apples. There is a market for a certain quantity. The boat on which I travelled back—the “Minderoo”—took up more than 1,000 cases of apples. Whoever shipped those apples ought to be prosecuted.

Mr. Teesdale: Ought to be horsewhipped.

Mr. STUBBS: On arrival at Singapore they were found to be not true to name, and were the most miserable apples ever sent away from any State. The merchant told the captain he would not accept delivery of them. They were sold by auction and did not realise a dollar a case, though the freight amounted to more than that. So incensed was the merchant that he vowed he would never entrust another order for apples to Western Australia. While in Java the captain interviewed a big fruit merchant, who said he had had the same experience with fruit from Western Australia and had transferred all his business to California. He had cabled for 40,000 cases of Californian apples from that week. Asked what they would cost, he replied, “I do not care a damn; when they arrive from California, I know they will be worth eating.” The apples grown in this State will bear favourable comparison with those grown in any other part of the world, and we should be able to capture this limited market, which is only three days’ sail from Derby. The ex-Minister for Education, Mr. Colebatch, was conducting some retired Indian officers around the metropolitan area a few months ago, and invited me to visit Mr. Barrett-Lennard’s orchard with them. Forty or fifty hands were picking grapes and packing them in a shed larger than this Chamber. Mr. Barrett-Lennard said he had 30,000 cases of grapes of one variety—the best export grapes. I told him I was going to Singapore, and would like to take a case with me and undertook to pay the cost. He told me I would have to deal with his agent at Fremantle. I asked the agent to put on board the “Gorgon” a case of apples and a case of grapes. For the 23 lbs. or 24 lbs. of grapes he charged £1 and the apples cost 9s. I thought the price was pretty stiff, but they were packed in cork-dust and I did not regret the cost. When the grapes arrived at their destination—Kuala Lumpur—some hundreds of miles from Singapore, though the climate was very moist, they were as fresh as one could wish. The day after my arrival I saw exactly the same kind of grapes marked 3s. 3d. per lb. Curiosity led me to inquire where the grapes came from, and the Chinese storekeeper informed me they had come from Western Australia. I remarked that he seemed to be making a big profit on them, and he replied, “No, the grapes get knocked about considerably.” He showed me a large number of bunches which had been badly bruised in transit and were quite unsaleable. Naturally, he had to secure a profit out of the good

ones. I asked him whether much fruit was imported from Australia and he replied that most of it came from California. I asked why and his answer was, "With fruit from Western Australia and other parts of Australia, the first shipment is all right, the second shipment middling, and the third shipment bad." I regret to say that I heard the same tale in all the other cities I visited.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Mr. Speaker, I cannot allow that remark to go without challenging it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. H. Smith: I am not prepared to listen—

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member rising to a point of order!

Mr. J. H. Smith: Yes, I ask the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) to withdraw that remark regarding the information he received from a Chinese merchant disparaging the fruitgrowers of Western Australia.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order. The member for Wagin may proceed.

Mr. STUBBS: I am not in a position to prove the statement.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Others have told us the same thing.

Hon. P. Collier: And it applies not only to fruit, but to everything else that is exported.

Mr. STUBBS: The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) referred in a disparaging tone to the Chinese. In that same city I was invited to inspect the railway workshops where there were 1,400 men of the nationality the hon. member would ridicule manufacturing locomotives, engines of various kinds, steam hammers, etc., and working quite as well as Europeans. I hope that workers in Western Australia will never have to work the number of hours that these men do. They work 363 days out of the year, but I am satisfied they can do anything that can be done in our Midland Junction workshops. It would pay the Government to send one or two of our railway carriage designers there to pick up some hints regarding their coaches.

Hon. P. Collier: My word, we have something to learn from them in railway management, also.

Mr. STUBBS: It is our duty to populate Australia or we cannot hope to hold it.

Mr. Underwood: We shall hold it all right. Do not worry about that.

Mr. STUBBS: That may be the hon. member's opinion, but if millions of people living under congested conditions decide that they must have more space, we may not be able to convince them that we have done our best to populate Australia.

Mr. Underwood: We are not dead yet.

Mr. STUBBS: I saw sugar marked 1½d. per lb., and of bananas one could get as many for 6d. as one could carry away. A Java merchant asked me why Australia did not grant reciprocity. He said, "We could consume plenty of your jam if the price were reasonable, but you will not allow our sugar to be imported into Australia, and if we send bananas, you charge duty on them." It

was impossible to return any effective answer to statements of that kind. There is a demand for jams, biscuits, and many other lines that we could supply, but there are several factors operating against us. One is that the labels are pasted on the tins with an adhesive which becomes ineffective in the moist atmosphere, so that the labels fall off and the tins become rusty. The biscuits sent from Australia compare favourably with those of English manufacture, but the English manufacturers beat us hollow in packing and general get-up. We supply biscuits in tins of 7 lbs. to 14 lbs. The English manufacturers, knowing the game, supply tins of 5 lbs. or 6 lbs. Every tin of biscuits sent from England has a thin zinc lining which may be readily cut with an ordinary pocket knife, and this makes all the difference to the keeping qualities of the biscuits. Our biscuits are sent in tins having a hinged lid and, as soon as the tin is opened, the biscuits begin to get damp and lose their crispness. Nine out of ten shopkeepers are unable to sell a tin of biscuits in one day, and in two or three days the biscuits become so moist that they are unsaleable. The English manufacturers use gum for their labels, and their labels are far more attractive than are ours. A Chinese millionaire named Chow Kit, who told me he had two sons at the Oxford University, invited me to dine at his home. He has a large store and the heads of his departments are Europeans. The rank and file are Chinese. He got his head grocer to give me half an hour one morning about the difficulties to be contended with when handling Australian goods. Some Eastern States manufacturers sent jams to the Malay States. The first shipment was all right, the second showed signs of falling off. Before the merchant had to give up using Australian jams at all, some tins marked as being apricot jam had turned out to be melon jam. That was the last straw. It meant the cutting off of the large sums of money which that merchant sent annually to Australia for jam. I wish to show that we are not properly represented in the Malay States, though the Commonwealth have a commissioner stationed at Singapore. About six weeks ago an exhibition was held at Kuala Lumpur, the first of its kind held in the Malay States. It was visited by about a couple of hundred thousand people. Every manufacturing country of the world was represented at that exhibition, but the only Australian exhibit—and this was indeed a credit to the exhibitors—was one of hams and bacons shown by Messrs. Hutton. It was certainly a magnificent display. The Commonwealth representative, though living at Singapore, which is only about 300 miles from Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Selangor, did not even visit the exhibition. English and American firms had exhibits there by the hundred. If we are sincere in our expressed desire to settle people on the land for the purposes of intense culture, fruit growing, and potato growing, it is up to the Government to see that we get markets for those products. Otherwise it is use-

less to ask people either on the Peel estate or anywhere else to go in for vegetable growing. I say without fear of contradiction that a very good trade can be done between Fremantle and Singapore in many lines that Western Australia can produce cheaply. There are potatoes, for instance. Nearly all the potatoes imported by the Malay States, apart from those that come from California, are of Chinese origin, none of them bigger than marbles, and altogether without taste. I am as much against State trading concerns as any man on this side of the House, but I think it would be greatly to the benefit of our producers if we had better steamships, possibly subsidised by the Government, trading between Western Australia and the Malay States. Certainly the obsolete vessels now employed on our coast are not conducive to procuring the good business that can be done with the Malay States in the directions I have indicated. We want a fast line of boats, running from here to Singapore in about 10 days. At present the voyage takes 17 days. Heaven knows how long it takes the "Kangaroo," with a speed of only seven or eight knots an hour, although she cost this country £400,000 or £500,000.

Mr. Underwood: She cost this country nothing. She has paid for herself.

Mr. STUBBS: I am glad to hear that.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do not forget that the "Kangaroo" has 300 tons refrigerated space.

Mr. STUBBS: But she is too slow. She does only seven or eight knots.

Mr. Angelo: She does nine and a half.

Mr. STUBBS: A more up-to-date vessel would be a great advantage to the trade of this State. Now I come to one or two matters I desire to bring forward regarding the Agricultural Bank. That institution is realised by everybody in Western Australia to have done an enormous amount of good in the development of our agriculture. From inquiries I have made it appears, however, that there has been no balance sheet of the Agricultural Bank published since the year 1917. Surely it is time we had a statement of the affairs of the bank after an interval of nearly six years. I wish to read an extract from a report which the late Mr. Paterson and the trustees of the bank made to Mr. R. T. Robinson when that gentleman was controlling the institution—

Nine hundred and eighty enlistments of bank clients have been noted. In a considerable number of these no satisfactory arrangements have been made for the maintenance of the improvements, and the losses on this account must prove very considerable. To minimise the wastage on untenanted securities, cropping leases have been arranged where possible, and 132 of these were in existence on the 31st December. Much more might be done in this direction but for the scarcity of labour.

I was wondering whether the bank have not lost a considerable amount of money in respect of many of their securities.

Mr. Underwood: Undoubtedly they have.

Mr. STUBBS: It is up to the House and to the country to know exactly how much has been lost. If the House is with me, I would urge the Premier to have a proper financial statement of the bank's affairs prepared, to cover the operations between 1917 and 1923. I also desire to point out that in my humble judgment the Industries Assistance Board is ready for wiping out of existence.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

Mr. STUBBS: The Industries Assistance Board was established by my friends opposite. To their everlasting credit, they came to the rescue at the right time, thus keeping on the land thousands of families who would not have been there to-day but for the Government assistance granted, with Parliamentary approval, in 1914. The measure establishing the Industries Assistance Board was, however, a war emergency measure. The war has been over for nearly five years, and it appears to me that some I.A.B. clients will never come off the board if they can possibly help it. Many of the I.A.B. clients are first-class accounts, but my opinion as a business man is that the accounts should all be revalued, and that those which are good should be transferred to the books of the Agricultural Bank and merged in the advances made for improvement purposes, repayment being spread over a term of years. It would be in the best interests of the State to offer that incentive to I.A.B. farmers who are doing their utmost to make good. As regards those farmers who have no desire to get off the board, who year after year take all they can possibly get in the shape of sustenance and do as little as they can in return, it is time they were closed down and their securities realised upon. I believe that all the officers in the Agricultural Bank are hard-working men, but it appears to me that in this connection two sets of books are unnecessary. The books of the Agricultural Bank should be amalgamated with those of the Industries Assistance Board, and thus a saving could be effected in management costs. The I.A.B., I repeat, represents an emergency measure due to the war.

Mr. Mann: And the drought.

Mr. STUBBS: In my opinion the measure has served its purpose and should be repealed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: One object of the measure is to keep the men on the land.

Mr. STUBBS: If the Government can show me what object is served by continuing the operations of the I.A.B., I shall be very glad.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It ensures the Government their land rents and interest.

Mr. STUBBS: The Government can demand payment of those charges under the security held by them for advances made for purposes outside the I.A.B. I am certain the I.A.B. will show a big loss in many cases. I know of such instances in my own electorate. The reason is that a number of men went on the land without knowing anything



about farming. The L.A.B. originally came into existence late in April or early in May, when the year was far advanced, and when, in consequence, there was very little time to look round and place things on a proper basis. As a result advances were made to many people far in excess of the amounts which should have been granted. I am not finding fault with the methods adopted in these days. Probably no one could have done better than was done at that time. But the point I desire to emphasise is that in some cases I know of, as much as £1,500 has been advanced by the L.A.B., and, in addition, £1,000 by the Agricultural Bank on a holding, which if it were sold to-day, would not realise the total of the two advances, to say nothing of the debt due to the unfortunate storekeeper who may hold a second mortgage over the property. I personally do not expect to see any dividends from clients whom my store has on its books dating back to those years, because year by year the debits have been written down, with the result that they now stand at about 2s. or 4s. in the pound. I believe most storekeepers have adopted the same principle. It is immaterial to me, therefore, whether or not the Government give any consideration to the storekeepers who during the last eight or nine years have lain out of their money in order that the farmer should not have his holding sold up. I regard the Premier's immigration scheme as a good one provided it is carried out on sound commercial lines. In a big scheme of that nature it is very difficult to have everything going swimmingly from the beginning. Mistakes are bound to occur in the first instance, but so long as those mistakes are recognised and rectified no fault can be found. If we do not bring more population into Western Australia, if we go on drifting year after year, it will mean that we shall have an impossible burden to carry financially. We have a mere handful of people, with a mile of railway to every 80 souls. No other country in the world has such a sparse population.

Mr. Underwood: Yes; Alaska has.

Mr. STUBBS: I have not been to that country. The area of Western Australia is just under a million square miles, and it carries a population of 1.80 to the square mile. The island of Java has a population of 36½ millions, or nearly 800 people to the square mile. Nearly every acre of Java is put to some use, except such parts of the island as are 10,000 feet up in the air. Here in Western Australia we have tens of millions of acres carrying hardly any population at all. These are facts, and they have to be faced. I am sure the Kimberleys possess untold wealth, not only in auriferous resources but also in agricultural possibilities. I hope some day to see 2,000 or 3,000 men there in place of 20 or 30. There is room for large numbers in the North-West, and unless we wake up and populate Western Australia we shall find ourselves unable to meet our financial obligations. I ask Ministers to regard anything I have said as uttered only with a desire to

offer suggestions which appeal to me as worthy of consideration and as tending to help this country along the road to prosperity.

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [5.45]: May I be permitted to express sympathy with and sorrow for the absence of the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlin) from his place in the House? I am sure every member of the House feels for him in his sickness, and hopes to see him back soon. Almost every member taking part in this debate has begun with a criticism of the migration policy of the Government. I intend to devote a little time to that subject later, but first I wish to discuss a few household matters in respect of the coalition. In the first place let me say there has been no rift in the lute, no break in that safe working which should favour every coalition Government; that is, as far as the relationship extends between the parties to that coalition. Not only in the House, but also in the minds of the public, there has grown up, perhaps with a very good reason, a feeling that the coalition Government are not a happy family. In point of fact there have been no quarrels between the parliamentary parties to that coalition; but there has been in certain parts of the coalition, notably in that to which I belong, a solid feeling against the attempted domination of one section of the coalition by an outside authority. If there be one subject which I have laboured more solidly than another on the hustings, it is the question of executive control. One of the most extraordinary features of this debate has been the attitude of my friends on the Opposition benches, who, despite the charge that has always lain against them of being dominated by an outside executive, have taken the lead in condemning the Country Party for the position in which that party is to-day. Since the Country Party has modelled its organisation largely on the lines of the excellently organised Official Labour Party, it is possible the position has arisen from that cause. But I would disabuse the minds of members, and voice the opinion that the Parliamentary Country Party has shown itself to be above the domination of Mr. Monger and his executive.

Mr. Pickering: Such domination has never existed.

Capt. CARTER: Well, the attempt to impose that domination has been manifest in the past, and I am not too sure it is no longer there. We have many men led by one notable personality—for Mr. Monger is a notable man—a strong element led by Mr. Monger, whose desire it is to upset any solid coalition, with the view to furthering the interests, not of the legitimate farmer, but of the Primary Producers' Association, which is a very different thing.

Mr. Pickering: Nonsense, it is representative of the farmers!

Capt. CARTER: Of a certain class of farmer; by no means the whole of the farmers, but merely a section of them.

Mr. Pickering: Every section.

Capt. CARTER: It may even be that it is representative of every section; but predominant in the executive control of the association is that element of the landed proprietary whose idea of the development of the State is not compatible with what seems to me the true and proper development which the State should follow.

Mr. Pickering: They are too successful.

Capt. CARTER: When the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) attacked Mr. Monger's speech, the Minister for Agriculture replied that after all it was only the personal opinion of Mr. Monger. However, when the president of an important association gets up and delivers a carefully studied address as the presidential address at the opening of a conference, it does not represent merely his own private opinion. After being endorsed, as it was, by the association, it must be regarded as the opinion of the association.

Mr. Pickering: The executive put in their own report.

Capt. CARTER: And it was ratified by the council. Therefore it becomes far more weighty than Mr. Monger's private opinion.

The Minister for Agriculture: What I said was that the president of the Primary Producers' Association was as much entitled as anybody else to an individual opinion.

Mr. Underwood: But was it merely his individual opinion?

Capt. CARTER: I have given the Minister for Agriculture and the members of his party credit for having refused to be dominated by the executive of the Primary Producers' Association.

Mr. Pickering: A domination that does not exist.

Capt. CARTER: My idea of the Primary Producers' Association is not on all fours with my conception of the Country Party in Parliament. I believe the Primary Producers' Association is not out to live strictly in accordance with its political platform. I believe, in the first place, the Primary Producers' Association is out after higher land values, bigger areas for individual holders, greater but cheaper facilities, and lower taxation. And I believe that in its heart the association is against closer settlement, in practice if not in theory.

Mr. Johnston: Closer settlement is part of its platform.

Capt. CARTER: It may be upon the political platform of the association. I know there are in the House members who are clamouring for closer settlement, but I believe that in its heart the executive is not fond of the closer settlement cry, is not out to have all the lands of Western Australia put upon a closer settlement basis.

Hon. P. Collier: They ordered their members to vote against the Bill last session.

Capt. CARTER: I am not prepared to go so far as that. The hon. member may have special information. If it be so, then the party must be under the domination of the executive. I sincerely hope it is not true.

However, the indications which one reads into a speech like that delivered by Mr. Monger lead one to connect it with various subjects associated with land settlement. The Primary Producers' Association has not shown an earnest of its desire to open up by closer settlement land adjacent to existing railways. I believe the association is solidly against the taxation of idle lands, which would bring into production tens of thousands of acres all over Western Australia, not merely in the South-West and the eastern districts, but in the district from which comes the Minister for Agriculture, where the acres, although they may be growing a few prize rams, are not in themselves adding to the value of the State.

Mr. Underwood: The rams serve to increase the selling price of the land.

Capt. CARTER: I believe the association is out for increased values, for greater areas, for more but cheaper facilities, and for lower taxation. They cry that the farmer is carrying the whole of the load. A member of the executive told me that no other Government in Western Australia had done more for the farmers than have the present Government. He characterised me and other metropolitan members as adjectival fools for allowing ourselves to give the Country Party and the farmers in general so much for nothing.

Mr. Hughes: He was right, too. You are not doing justice to the metropolitan area.

Capt. CARTER: I can stand up against many things, but I hope the member for East Perth will not tackle me with his broadsides. I can stand the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) and even the Minister for Agriculture, but from that voice over there let me be delivered! I believe the executive of the Primary Producers' Association is against the development of Western Australia along lines which would be in the best interests of Western Australia.

Mr. Pickering: Of course we cannot enlighten you.

The Minister for Agriculture: Give us a few of your own planks.

Capt. CARTER: One of the first planks I would apply to country districts would be the taxation of unimproved areas which are bringing in no revenue to the State, which yesterday were got for nothing, and to-morrow will be sold for £5 per acre.

The Minister for Agriculture: Unimproved nonsense!

Mr. Johnston: Would not you apply it to city areas also?

Capt. CARTER: Most certainly I would. We are calling out for more land, and yet the astonishing fact has been revealed that to-day we cannot survey the land quickly enough to give blocks to approaching settlers. Instead of using all our surveyors as we should, so that they may open up our great empty spaces, many of them are out of work to-day.

The Minister for Works: The Premier explained that it was due to the wet season.

The Minister for Agriculture: There never has been a time in the history of the State when surveyors have been more active.

Capt. CARTER: The fact remains that one, if not three or four camps are not working to-day. It is explained that this is due to wet weather. They were working six weeks ago when it was much wetter. There are many camps working to-day in the wet. Why are the other camps not working? The Premier stated we should have more land available if it had been surveyed.

The Minister for Agriculture: Every surveyor in the State has had almost two years' continuous employment.

Capt. CARTER: The Premier said the weather had prevented the operations of the surveyors. If one camp can keep going, I cannot see why every camp, containing as it does experienced men, cannot keep going. The surveyor I had in mind has been surveying in the State for 28 years. He is one of the pioneers, and his work has been good enough for 28 years. There is no question about the quality of his work, but to-day he is idle. The Surveyor-General is away from the State at a conference. There is no programme of work outlined for this man.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We ought to put an end to some of these conferences.

Hon. P. Collier: Every express carries away a couple of officers at the country's expense. Nathan and his secretary have gone now.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It will be the turn of the medical men next.

Capt. CARTER: May I interrupt and say a word or two regarding the attitude of members opposite as to immigration? I have been interested in the speeches delivered in this House upon this question. There seems to be a sort of grouse on the part of certain members opposite, though I have failed to nail it down in any concrete form. From the Leader of the Opposition downwards we have heard that the policy of immigration and the scheme of the Premier are admirable, and essential to the proper development of Western Australia. Whilst that statement has been made by every member opposite, I have heard nothing but a few isolated complaints regarding the treatment of migrants, such as that with respect to "Bill," who is one of the individuals spoken of. No concrete charge has been laid against the scheme itself and scarcely any against the administration. An admission was made by the Leader of the Opposition by way of an interjection the other night when defending the Government. A member on this side was speaking, I think the member for Claremont, and charging the Government with certain defects, when the Leader of the Opposition interjected that the matter referred to had been remedied. The general tenor of the speeches has been towards the admission that whenever anomalies, defects, or mistakes have arisen, to the best of their ability the Government had eliminated them or altered their programme or policy so that these things should not occur again.

Hon. P. Collier: I did not say that. I strongly disapprove of taking immigrants from the ship straight into a group settlement without any previous experience. You misunderstood my interjection.

Capt. CARTER: That is not the interjection to which I refer. I am speaking of one in relation to a certain telegram sent to the member for Claremont by the gentleman who recently held the position of Minister for Education. That which I have culled from the speeches opposite seems to be something in the nature of a half expressed question. Members have not yet definitely stated whether the New Settlers' League, Trades Hall, or the Government Labour Bureau should have the handling and dispersion of the settlers as they arrive. I do not know what the grouse is over. Members opposite have not told us whether it is their desire or not that the Government Labour Bureau should be situated in Beaufort-street, or whether if that is brought about they will gain in electioneering propaganda or have some kudos attached to them. I think better of them than to credit them with such a motive. We have heard so many half expressed suggestions regarding the New Settlers' League and the Government Labour Bureau that we can see behind the minds of members opposite, and perceive their desire that this matter should be handled by Beaufort-street at the Trades Hall.

Mr. Hughes: That is where the unemployed come.

Capt. CARTER: They go there when they are taken. We know of the conference that was held the other morning. After much advertisement in the Press it was announced that there would be a conference of dissatisfied migrants at the Labour headquarters in Beaufort-street. The conference was to open at 10 o'clock in the morning. At that hour the only people present were the president of the Labour Council (the member for Hannans) and one or two others. At 10.45 there were less than a dozen people present, and at 10.50 the president announced his intention of going to the Labour Bureau to rake them up.

Mr. Munsie: That is an absolute misstatement, and I ask for a withdrawal. I made no such remark, and the hon. member cannot prove it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for Leederville must withdraw the remark.

Capt. CARTER: I have great pleasure in withdrawing the actual words, but not the meaning.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw unreservedly.

Capt. CARTER: Without equivocation I withdraw, but he said it.

Mr. Munsie: I said nothing of the kind, and you know I did not.

Capt. CARTER: I should like to know—

Mr. Munsie: I take exception to the hon. member's remark. He unreservedly withdrew, and then he added, "but he said it." I ask him to again withdraw the statement.

I did not say it, and will not have the hon. member say I did say it.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member said that he must withdraw it.

Capt. CARTER: I withdraw. I should like to ask the hon. member if he did say it.

Mr. Munsie: I did not say it, neither did I go to the Labour Bureau, and you know it.

Mr. Corboy: The whole of his statement is on a par with most of his other statements—wrong.

Capt. CARTER: I ask the President of the Official Labour Party what examination he made of the delegates. We have the admission from the other side that there have been a certain percentage of migrants who represent a type that will not make good. Men like that do not desire to make good, and have been either dummed or shanghaied out here. Many of them will eventually drift into our police courts, and in some cases a worse fate may befall them.

Mr. Corboy: If they have been shanghaied out here is it not the fault of the Government at the other end?

Capt. CARTER: I am not in a position to refute that. It would be as ridiculous for me to deny it as it is foolish of the hon. member to make the remark. What examination of the 50 or so delegates was made as to their bona fides or their history since they arrived in the State?

Mr. Pickering: Some of them have been here for 20 years.

Capt. CARTER: That may be so. The member for Sussex is one of our migrants, and he has made good. A statement was made by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Wilcock) about the exploitation of migrants. He demanded that wages commensurate with those obtainable in other industries should be paid in the farming industry. Is he serious in that remark? I cannot conceive that he meant it in a serious way. There cannot be an industry that offers such valuable assets after a term of years of labour as that of the farming industry. If we look round this Chamber we can see illustration after illustration showing how men have gone on the land without capital, and with little or no experience, but by reason of their hard work and energies they have to-day built around them a valuable asset. They may not have a credit balance of £10,000, but many of them are probably in possession of farms and have an excess of assets over liabilities running well into four figures. In what other industries can £1,000 be saved in 10 years? Yet the member for Geraldton demands that wages commensurate with those obtainable in other industries should be made available to the migrants. These people come out here to much better conditions than those which surrounded them in England. In many cases they come to better conditions immediately they arrive. Many of them have lived in the poorer quarters of the cities of England where they have had insufficient light or fresh air, and where food of a decent nature was not always obtainable. In Western Australia they

will get better conditions of living. As they grow in experience and learn the lessons this great State has to teach them, they too will amass for themselves valuable assets even though they be not in kind. Their experience will enable them to go from place to place learning still more, until like many of their forbears they will finally become possessed of their own farms and homes for their families. I agree with the member for Pilbara that we cannot leave these inexperienced men to paddle their own canoes. I do not, however, hold the opinion that we are called upon as a people to spoon-feed them, or to lead them by the hand, and father and mother them as a State. The New Settlers' League is fulfilling a very valuable function. I firmly believe, in spite of what the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) said, it is doing its work at less cost than would accrue if it were handled by a Government department. The hon. member told us of a wonderful scheme in New Zealand, and said that the paid officials there could do the work better than honorary officials.

Mr. Latham: They cannot do it as cheaply.

Capt. CARTER: I am sure they can do it as cheaply, and possibly much better than the paid officials. So long as we have men interested in the development of our State and in the welfare of its newcomers, ready to help and advise them as they are now doing, and as I have seen them doing in the country districts, I am sure the migrant will get as fair a deal as it is possible to give him.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Capt. CARTER: Prior to the dinner adjournment I was dealing with the migration question and had arrived at a point when I was discussing the conditions under which migrants are being asked to take up land in Western Australia. We have illustrations in this House of men who have come to Western Australia from overseas who, equally with the people coming here to-day, have had to face hard, pioneering times. They began at the bottom of the ladder. They started without capital. They worked their way, through industry and energy, into the position of having fine homes and, in many cases, splendid incomes. It seems to me that if those gentlemen have been able to succeed in their work under conditions which were not nearly so favourable as those offering to migrants to-day, it is only reasonable to suppose that the great majority of the "triers" amongst those who are coming to-day to Western Australia will also succeed. While I dislike the term "spoon-fed," no one can gainsay the fact that the migrant to-day is not only met at the boat, given the fullest information, and conveyed to a farm, but in the majority of cases, he is assisted in every possible way by his employers to become a useful farm hand, and so placed upon the road to becoming a farm-owner himself. There is a type of mind in the community

that delights in looking upon the darker side of life. To give a homely illustration: If we saw a cab-horse topple down in the street in a jaded, dying condition, a crowd of people would at once gather round to watch the sight. If at the same time a number of spanking horses passed down the road, the eyes of the people would be upon the failure and wreck, rather than upon the spanking horses that trotted past. That is characteristic of the attitude adopted by the critics of the Government towards migration to-day. Unfortunately, there are always failures in every walk of life, and every member on the Opposition side, having admitted that point, has proceeded further to magnify those failures in the eyes of the public, magnifying them as crimes for which the Government are responsible, and, it may be added, tickling the ears of the people in anticipation of the next general election.

Mr. Richardson: It is propaganda.

Mr. Lutcy: You have had enough criticism from your own side.

Capt. CARTER: That may be so, but the criticism has been nailed down by facts. I do not stand four-square behind everything that is said on the Government side of the House. I have never done so, and I hope the day will never come when I shall do so. The constitution of the party to which I belong is sufficiently broad to allow one to express one's own views.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And we should have no views on our side of the House!

Capt. CARTER: You should have your views, but I want concrete proofs of the charges the Opposition is prepared to lay against the Government, in regard to migration.

Hon. T. Walker: You can get them.

Capt. CARTER: There was a gentleman who passed through Australia and earned for himself every form of opprobrium and disgust the people could level at him, within the limits of the English language. He flitted through Australia and spent ten minutes in Western Australia. Immediately, however, he came forth with a wonderful book on the Commonwealth. Some of his facts were wrong and his geography was astray. In the main, however, it was readable stuff and it had a sale in other countries. I refer to the notorious Foster Fraser. We have had another Foster Fraser who came through just recently. He has come through under the guise—which is more dangerous still—of an Overseas Commissioner.

Hon. T. Walker: What do you mean by "under the guise"?

Capt. CARTER: I will tell the hon. member.

Hon. T. Walker: He came with authority.

Capt. CARTER: He came under the guise and with the authority of a Royal Commission from the House of Commons.

Hon. T. Walker: There was no guise or disguise.

Capt. CARTER: If the hon. member wants to split points and quibble, he can do so.

Hon. T. Walker: There is no quibble about that.

Capt. CARTER: If he wants that, I will deal with him in detail.

Mr. Lambert: You will do a lot.

Capt. CARTER: If the hon. member will listen to me and let me state the point I wish to make, he will get a few more members on this side of the House than I have on the Labour side to listen to me now. Apparently the Opposition do not like what I say.

Mr. Lambert: You will do a lot of good for Western Australia by attacking the delegation.

Hon. T. Walker: We do not want you to be unjust.

Capt. CARTER: The hon. member will not allow me to say what I want to say. I have not named any individual. Why is he biting so? Perhaps he knows to whom I have referred.

Hon. T. Walker: You referred to one coming here with the authority of a Commission from the House of Commons as coming "under the guise."

Capt. CARTER: Was there only one, or were there six or eight of them?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He is one of six, anyhow.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Capt. CARTER: If the Opposition desire to split points, they will not keep me off my point. I wish to refer to a wonderful speech made by a gentleman named Wignall, who came with the authority of a Commission from the House of Commons. He delivered a speech at the Trades Hall. I have read it carefully, and as I sum it up—I am responsible for my own opinions—it is nothing more than a carefully considered attempt to damn with faint praise the Premier's policy of immigration.

Hon. T. Walker: Nothing of the sort.

Capt. CARTER: I will deal with the speech as it appeared in the Press. If there is anything wrong with that report, I am not responsible for it.

Mr. Munsie: You will be to blame, because it was a public meeting and you should have been there.

Capt. CARTER: I was here in the House, where the hon. member should have been.

Mr. Munsie: And I was here, too.

Mr. Lambert: It was one of the rare occasions on which the member for Leederville was here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Richardson: Who is making the speech?

Capt. CARTER: If I may interrupt the debate, I would like to read what this gentleman said. In the course of his remarks he said—

He had been very astonished to see large tracts of land wired in; someone had to buy it, if it was only the Government. All the best land he had seen in any of the States was owned by private individuals—

Hon. T. Walker: He was referring to land he had seen.

Mr. Richardson: And he was here for ten minutes!

Capt. CARTER: He does not say how much of the country he had seen.

Mr. Lambert: He was only shown the best.

Capt. CARTER: He does not admit that he travelled in a comfortable car and that he only saw what the windows of his railway compartment displayed. He could say, however, that all the land was owned by private individuals; that there was nothing in the State for the migrants. He said—

If there was any difference between the States in this regard, it lay in the fact that one was worse than the other.

Hon. P. Collier: What he stated was a fact. The best of the available land has been taken up. Does the hon. member say that in a country that has been settled for over a hundred years the best of the land would not be taken up?

Capt. CARTER: It is ridiculous to quibble on that point.

Hon. P. Collier: Your statements are ridiculous. You know that the best of the land is taken up.

Capt. CARTER: The point is, that this gentleman came here with the authority of the House of Commons—

Hon. P. Collier: Why sneer at the House of Commons? Is not a member of that Chamber entitled to respect equally with a member of this Chamber?

Capt. CARTER: I was taken up by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) when I said—

Hon. P. Collier: It is not courteous to sneer at such a visitor.

Hon. T. Walker: He said Mr. Wignall came here under false pretences.

Capt. CARTER: I have not said that Mr. Wignall came here under false pretences.

Mr. Lambert: You said "under the guise."

Capt. CARTER: Mr. Wignall, in the course of his speech, said—

Everyone was amazed when a member of the House of Commons declared, during the last session of Parliament, that in Australia the land was largely owned by private persons, syndicates, and other organisations.

Hon. P. Collier: Those are facts.

Capt. CARTER: Again he said—

He now saw that this statement, so far from being an exaggeration, did not fill the bill, if anything. He would endeavour to fill the bill himself when he got home again. (Applause.)

Mr. McCallum: He has seen more of Australia than you have seen.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. McCallum: Although he has been here for so short a time.

Capt. CARTER: He could not have seen one thousandth part of the land that is available.

Mr. McCallum: Nor have you.

Capt. CARTER: Yet he can make a statement of this description!

Hon. P. Collier: He referred to the land he saw.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Order! Hon. members must keep order.

Capt. CARTER: My point seems to strike home. The Opposition have not only swallowed the bait, but the whole line as well.

Hon. P. Collier: It is ridiculous.

Capt. CARTER: When Mr. Wignall goes back to report to the House of Commons, I can imagine this fair-minded gentleman telling the people from the floor of the House of Commons how Australia is privately owned, and that there is no land available for migrants.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We were asked to pass a Closer Settlement Bill last session for Western Australia.

Capt. CARTER: Mr. Wignall said he was more concerned about the failures.

The Minister for Agriculture: There are more failures in the Old Country.

Capt. CARTER: In the course of his speech, he said—

He was more concerned in the failures among the immigrants than the successes. There are some who heard this gentleman say when he arrived in Western Australia that he was charmed and he marvelled at the opportunities offering for migrants in Western Australia, as in other States.

Mr. Heron: He said that in his speech.

Capt. CARTER: He said something about that aspect in his remarks. Continuing, Mr. Wignall said—

He agreed whole-heartedly with the system of family migration but in fairness he must say that from the Premier downwards no one had attempted to hinder his investigations.

Hon. T. Walker: What is wrong with that?

Capt. CARTER: Then he goes on again—

The migration scheme in this State was a bold one, and had filled him with astonishment; it was full of possibilities of success and failure of a serious character.

He is intent upon looking for the failures—the serious failures that were likely to ensue. He condemned the circulation of false stories in the Old Country, and he went on with a lot of pious tripe. Then the sting was in the tail of his speech—

He had been among the group settlements and wherever he had met the men and women, individually or collectively, he must say that he had heard no complaints or any expressions of a desire to leave the work they were engaged upon.

Hon. P. Collier: Is that not a very impartial statement?

Capt. CARTER: Yes, but you must read it with the context. Hon. members opposite do not always take the context of a speech when they quote it from "Hansard" of years ago against someone whom they may be criticising. Mr. Wignall attempted to damn by faint praise the immigration policy of Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I had a conversation with him and I do not condemn him.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members must keep order.

Capt. CARTER: A little lower down in the report of the speech we get this—

It is full not only of possibilities but of tragedies which must of necessity arise. The whole speech is far too long to weary the House with. Hon. members have heard him. Of course we all have our own opinions, and I am expressing mine about a Royal Commissioner who comes out here and makes what I consider a purely ex-parte statement on groundless evidence, evidence which was not considered correctly and which was not properly gathered. I condemn his utterance on these grounds: Firstly, he did not see enough of the State.

Mr. Lambert: You are only preaching now because the general election is approaching and you will have to face your constituents.

Mr. Richardson: So will you.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Coolgardie must keep order.

Mr. Lambert: Well, I will go out; that is what I will do. I cannot remain here and listen to such tripe.

Mr. Underwood: You will have to stop out, too.

Mr. Lambert: I will go out after that. Ta-ta.

Capt. CARTER: I repeat, that in the first place I condemn the utterance because Mr. Wignall did not see enough of the State. In the second place, he has either wilfully or through carelessness obtained a wrong view of the land settlement policy of the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He spent an hour or two with the Premier.

Capt. CARTER: The hon. member is so excited that he cannot even talk sense. In the third place, he was guilty of jaundiced discrimination in the manner in which he took his evidence. In the fourth place, his findings are in opposition to the evidence he did gather, and, to use his own words, he was more concerned in digging up failures amongst the migrants than the successes.

Mr. Underwood: And in the fifth place he would not stop long enough to learn anything.

Capt. CARTER: That may be so. At a little gathering at which Mr. Wignall was being entertained, a remark was made by a certain gentleman in this city to the effect that he had landed in Western Australia penniless with the exception of £4 which he had borrowed.

Hon. P. Collier: Then how could he have been penniless?

Capt. CARTER: That gentleman went on to say that to-day his position was well known in the business circles of the city. Mr. Wignall was so keen and fair and above board in his view as to remark, "But you did not do it out of your wages." He did not. He made it out of a concern which he started single-handed and in which now he is providing employment for 100 men, and providing wages for hundreds of others. I would like now to quote for the benefit of the House, a letter which I have in my possession from a migrant who is satisfied with his conditions, and I would like to read this letter in opposition to that read by the mem-

ber for East Perth (Mr. Hughes), from "Straight Joe" to "Dear Bill." I am not going to say who the letter is from. I will merely read extracts from it to show the true British spirit that permeates the splendid type of settler now peopling the South-West:

However, I do not think we shall get dumpy because of a few preliminary hardships. Billy and I have been up against it in some stiffer tussles than this, and after all this is what we have worked towards for three years—land of our own. We mean to have a ripping little farm later on and then you must come and stay for a while and I'll teach you how to make butter . . . . We set off in a motor lorry on a 60-mile drive, which took us through some of the loveliest scenery I have ever seen since I came to Western Australia. In some parts, where you caught a glimpse through the immense trees of a river or timbered hillside, the vista was so strikingly reminiscent of Sussex that I felt sure that is how this division got its name. The road was flooded in many places and the car churned through water well over the dashboard, and although it rained pretty steadily we enjoyed ourselves thoroughly . . . . We have an extremely nice foreman, who allowed me to have the first and only "humpy" on the place. All the others camped in lean-to iron or tents.

He goes on to describe the preliminary work and gives, as I have said, an idea of what really is the true British spirit. Mr. Wignall was shown letters of this description, and he says that he met this type of settler, but he declared that he was more interested in the failures which were taking place, and which were bound to take place.

Hon. P. Collier: And what is wrong with that?

Capt. CARTER: Was there any indication in the speech delivered at the Trades Hall to show that Mr. Wignall was going to be equally impartial and fair in his statement of the case for the successful man as for the unsuccessful? If so, the fact was not chronicled by the "West Australian" reporter, and the only conclusion one can arrive at is that he really was more interested in the failures than the successes, and that he would endeavour to fill the bill himself when he returned to England. I can imagine him roaring it in the House of Commons.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I hope the other members of the Commission will be as fair as he will be.

Capt. CARTER: The member for Murdoch the other night spoke very ably on a text which he disclosed at the opening of his speech, namely, "Promises that would never be fulfilled." So far as I can dissect the hon. member's speech, the promises related to continuous employment and that they could not be honoured by the Mitchell administration. I do not know whether the hon. member expected us to take a general statement such as that without any illustration to prove his words. Did he think that we were all asleep, and that we did not know that such a

condition of affairs had existed for some time?

Mr. Marshall: You have only to walk along the city streets to see unemployed at every few yards.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Capt. CARTER: The hon. member did not mention the fact that more employment has been found this year by the Government than in any previous years by any previous Government. He did not mention that even in fairness to the Government; he did not say that which we all know to be the cause and which the Premier has said will be remedied, namely, that migrants were brought here during a slack period and that that had taken place on other occasions during the administration of other Governments. This, in all probability, will always occur at a certain period of the year. The hon. member did not give us the benefit of facts such as those. He merely said that employment was one of the promises made by the Government and that it had not been fulfilled. Then he spoke about business acumen. I can only reply to that in the language of the gentleman who was clothed with the authority of the House of Commons, and who said that Sir James Mitchell's was a bold scheme which filled him with astonishment and held possibilities of success. Then that same gentleman goes further and declares "I agree whole-heartedly with the scheme." Was there not business acumen behind the formulation of a scheme of that nature? Evidence from such a high authority should surely be strong enough to gain a word of commendation even from the member for Murchison. After all, the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and the several lieutenants, have offered no criticism of the scheme.

Hon. P. Collier: Then what are you crying out about?

Capt. CARTER: I am just drawing the attention of hon. members opposite to what was said about the absence of business acumen on this side of the House.

Hon. P. Collier: If we criticise, you are not satisfied; if we do not criticise, you still are not satisfied. Whatever can we do to please you?

Capt. CARTER: Even that remark will not stop me; I intend to go on.

Hon. T. Walker: Turn the handle.

Capt. CARTER: If I were able to churn out as many tons of verbiage as the hon. member, my life would not be finished until I had arrived at a ripe old age. Admissions have been made on both sides of the House, as we all know, that where wrongs have existed in connection with the migration scheme, they have been righted wherever it has been possible to do so. I do not know that it will be possible, certainly not on this side of the millennium, to carry out a scheme of such magnitude without mistakes. No doubt mistakes have been made and I am perfectly prepared to admit that.

Hon. P. Collier: And that is all we have said.

Capt. CARTER: I want hon. members opposite to realise that when they make such statements they come with more portent than would be the case if they came from members on this side of the House. Amongst all the speeches there has been one piece of constructive criticism from the member for Kalgoorlie and it was a gem. This hon. member wants immigrants from the Eastern States, people already acclimatised, people of our own kith and kin. What of the Imperial aspect of migration? What cares he for the great Australian national aspect? What cares he for increasing the population?

Hon. P. Collier: Wait until I bring him in so that he shall feel the full force of your crushing. It is so annihilating!

Capt. CARTER: I have held the opinion for a year or more that the Opposition are placed in a very awkward position in having to maintain allegiance to the policy of the Government of the day. I sympathise with them.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We do not want your sympathy.

Capt. CARTER: They are placed in a very awkward position, especially in view of the impending general election. They are always telling us that the Government are playing to the gallery. Of course they are not playing to the gallery in the exploitation of Mr. Wignall's position as a Commissioner from the House of Commons.

Hon. P. Collier: The policy we all support and yet we are exploiting him to oppose it! That is logic.

Capt. CARTER: Members opposite are not game to oppose it in Western Australia.

Hon. P. Collier: Then why exploiting him to oppose it?

Capt. CARTER: I have made the point and I will do my best to carry on, but I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to give me a certain amount of protection.

Mr. Marshall: That is Leederville logic.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Capt. CARTER: Summing up the whole position, I repeat it is painfully evident that the Opposition are placed in a very awkward predicament in having to officially endorse the policy of the Government. It is an awkward position and that is where I shall leave them.

The Minister for Mines: That is the time to leave them.

Hon. P. Collier: You say the Opposition endorse it and yet we are exploiting and not endorsing it. What beautiful logic!

Capt. CARTER: In the callowness of my youth I may have made a slip in logic or rhetoric.

Hon. P. Collier: Your rhetoric is all right. You ought to take a course in logic.

Capt. CARTER: Anyhow, I have made the main point and obviously it has gone well home. Every member of the Opposition knows that what I have said is perfectly true, and what is more the public, too, know it is true.



I have always denounced State trading and I do so because I regard it as the first step towards nationalisation of industry. The whole-hearted support given it by members of the Opposition and the keenness with which every inch of the way has been fought clearly indicate that they regard State trading as one of the main arteries leading to the heart of their desires.

Hon. T. Walker: An artery leads away from the heart.

Capt. CARTER: One of their desires is the eradication of capital.

Mr. Lutey: Quite correct.

Hon. P. Collier: Eradication of capital! You do not understand what capital is.

Hon. T. Walker: It grows from roots, then!

Capt. CARTER: I must claim your protection, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Capt. CARTER: I wish to quote from a speech made in the House of Commons and I trust that members will listen to it with a little better attention than I have received so far. The speech was delivered by Sir Alfred Mond, speaking in the House of Commons on Mr. Snowden's motion declaring for the supersession of the capitalistic system by a system of public ownership.

I would say to my hon. friends that after the war the Germans had a socialistic Government, a socialistic majority. Yet they have been careful not to introduce any of these schemes of socialism. Let me follow on with a few more examples of another kind. Let me take a very highly civilised country like France. Let me refer to the nationalised French railways. In 1908 the deficit on the State managed railways rose from 35,000,000 francs in 1909 to 77,400,000 francs in 1911. Then take Italy. Italy had national railways, but they denationalised them because they found they could not make them pay. I will tell them something on housing. When I was at the Ministry of Health, men engaged in the building industry would always work cheaper for a private contractor on a private job than they would ever work for a local authority. A curious paralysing influence seems to come over everybody as soon as they begin to work for the State. One reason is that everybody has a cushy job. There is no profit and loss account. Nobody much cares how the money is being spent. What keeps this wretched capitalistic system going? I will tell you. If a private capitalistic business is badly managed it goes into the bankruptcy court. If those words had been applied to the operations of State trading in Western Australia the position could not have been more aptly put.

Hon. P. Collier: It appeared in that Australian pamphlet.

Capt. CARTER: If the hon. member wishes to have a copy, I can supply him.

Hon. P. Collier: It is very handy to have your speeches made for you.

Mr. Underwood: Well, it gives you something to refute, so there you are.

Capt. CARTER: I have taken these words from the British "Hansard." If the Leader of the Opposition will answer them with such clarity as will convince the House that the arguments are illogical, I shall stand corrected. Meanwhile I shall continue.

What does that mean? It means you have a method by which inefficiency is automatically weeded out of your industrial system. Hon. members have not found any system to take its place. Civil service examinations, which is the only substitute for State socialism, are not going to replace the crude fact that people who cannot make profits in a business have to go under and make way for the people who can. That is the whole basis of our free competitive system.

Hon. P. Collier: That is only Mond's opinion, anyhow.

Capt. CARTER: As applied to our State trading concerns, those words are very apt. Our State trading concerns cannot stand alone. They could not face the glare of the bankruptcy court or of proper examination. We know they have cost the State hundreds of thousands of pounds and that the State is out of pocket over them.

The hon. member says the competitive system has disappeared. That is not true. You can trustify your industries as much as you like; there is no trust powerful enough in the world to-day to ignore the danger and the risk of able and new competition in all parts of the world. The pace is too keen; competition is too swift. Nobody can afford to sit idly by and draw dividends out of labour. The idea that you can make money out of labour is one of the greatest fallacies in the minds of a certain number of economists. Why does anybody want a capitalist? The capitalistic system, as the hon. member said, is not a created thing from the beginning of the world. People pay for capital because it is required. Nobody takes the risk of borrowing capital unless he sees some reward from the result of his labour. The hon. member knows that as well as I do, and he ought to state it frankly. If I have to pay 10 per cent. for capital it means I have a risky proposition. If I have to pay 2½ per cent. it means I have a safe proposition. The capitalists are the people, the only people in this country, who, instead of putting money in their pocket, instead of spending it, or doing nothing with it, instead of investing their money in luxury, are investing it in industry and making either loss or profit out of it.

Incidentally creating work and employment and wage earning opportunities for the people of the country. The whole question of State trading is bound up in this one principle as to whether we are to attempt the abolition of private ownership, setting up in its place public ownership and the nationalisation of industry. It is a wrong road to take. No one has sought to prove the advantages of

breaking down the capitalistic system, because no one has ever been able to construct another system to put in its place. For these reasons I shall always oppose State trading, and I hope the day will soon come when the Government will realise that the first loss should be the last loss, and will take immediate steps to abolish the iniquitous system. Our industries are small and are struggling against many adverse conditions. There is keen competition from without, and any further load placed upon industry must act detrimentally to the establishment of secondary industries. I shall leave that question there. I wish to direct the attention of the Government to a matter which should form the subject of a short Bill to be introduced this session, the question of free tram and rail passes in the metropolitan area to members of the Returned Maimed and Limbless Soldiers' Association.

Hon. T. Walker: Why, that is State enterprise.

Capt. CARTER: The report of the president, issued on the 12th July, states—

Up till a week or so before the date of their expiry, it was not known whether these passes would be renewed or not in their present form. Although the Legislature had expressed its opinion that members of this association should receive these passes, there appeared to be a certain amount of hesitation in the Premier's Department in granting the renewal. The Premier's secretary expressed the opinion that a number of our members were in a position which enabled them to pay fares. However, after our secretary had interviewed the Premier's secretary, Mr. Shapcott agreed to grant the renewal of the passes for a further period of 12 months. I recommend that suitable action be taken during the coming year to ensure having these passes placed on a sound footing. We cannot submit to any discrimination as between members in regard to a concession granted by Parliament to all our members.

This House has expressed its opinion on the subject and the most suitable action it could take would be to grant in perpetuity to these men—the membership of the association is carefully watched—a free tram and rail pass in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Lutey: Do private companies in England allow free passes?

Capt. CARTER: If the hon. member will give notice of that question to Mr. Wignall, he may be able to answer it next time he comes out.

Mrs. Cowan: Never mind what England does, let us in Australia do what is right.

Capt. CARTER: On the question of surveying, to-day I received certain answers from the Premier. I asked—

Is it a fact that there are certain surveyors at present out of employment in Western Australia?

The answer to that was "Yes." To-day I think the Government should be in a position

to judge of the necessity for utilising every avenue to get land made ready for settlers as they arrive. I know for a fact that one survey camp is out of commission in the South-West, and I have been told that four camps are out of commission.

Hon. T. Walker: How dare you find fault with the Government?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Capt. CARTER: The camp I know to be out of commission is that of a surveyor who has been surveying for the Government for 28 or 30 years. His work therefore must have been satisfactory. I know of no suggestion of any charge being made against him. The fact remains, however, that he and his gang are out of work. Apart from the hardship entailed on the surveyor and his men, the work of settlement is retarded.

The Minister for Agriculture: There must be some reason.

Capt. CARTER: The reason given to me to-day is that the weather has been too wet. Have the Government only just discovered that the weather has been wet in the South-West? If so, it indicates that the Government have not been watching the surveys closely enough. On the question of a city milk supply, it is unnecessary to stress the importance of the subject. In many cases milk is the staple diet of young mothers and children, and we rely on it largely for the maintenance of our public health. Yet I suppose there is no more antiquated system of milk distribution in the world than exists in the city of Perth to-day.

Mr. Underwood: Milk is not a necessity.

Capt. CARTER: If it is not a necessity, still it is handy to mix with something else. We have to-day the most cumbersome system operating for the distribution of milk here. I would suggest the institution of a zone system for the distributing of milk in the metropolitan area. To-day we have in many short streets, streets of a dozen houses, as many as five or six milk carts delivering.

Mr. Marshall: What about interference with private enterprise?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Capt. CARTER: What I have in mind is that from the real dairymen, the men who produce the milk, not the mere transmitters, there should be a distributing district arranged, cutting the metropolitan area into zones. Over these zones the milk would be handled by appointed purveyors.

Hon. T. Walker: Appointed by whom?

Capt. CARTER: I think, Mr. Speaker—

Hon. T. Walker: Appointed by whom?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Capt. CARTER: I will wait until the chorus is finished.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. Walker: Appointed by whom?

Capt. CARTER: There it goes again. When one considers the position as outlined in a small article published in this morning's paper, which I shall read, one realises the

seriousness of the subject. The article states—

Milk to the household consumer to-day costs 4½d. a pint, or 3s. a gallon, but the dairyman who produces the milk receives only about 1s. 4d. a gallon, the actual price paid to him being a penny or two above or below that amount. The milk supply of the city is not produced by the dairymen of Perth, but comes from dairies in the outer suburban areas. The dairyman sends his milk into a receiving depot in Perth, and the retail milk trader purchases his supplies from the depot at a price of about 1s. 8½d. a gallon, and retails it at 3s. a gallon. The dairymen are organised as producers, and the retailers also possess a registered organisation. The latter body recently notified the three milk-purchasing depots operating in Perth that it required a reduction of 2d. a gallon in the price paid. The depots, in turn, notified the producers that, if the request of the retailers were granted, it would mean an automatic reduction of the same amount in the price they were being paid. The district branch of the milk producers' organisation met, and considered the matter and decided to hold a mass meeting at the Court Hotel on Thursday morning next. It has been suggested that some of the suppliers are prepared, if the price paid to them for their milk is reduced by 2d. a gallon, to withhold their milk from the depots. In the meantime, the retailers are continuing their negotiations for a reduction with the managers of the depots.

Mr. Marshall: What about the competitive system you gave us a little while ago?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Capt. CARTER: In a matter affecting the public health as this does, there should be a more mobile system than that operating in Perth to-day. In other parts of the world I have seen very up-to-date systems, under which at the receiving depot the milk is bottled in stated quantities, the bottles being hermetically sealed. These sealed bottles are taken to the houses of the consumers and there exchanged for empty ones. That very expensive system was instituted in Aberdeen. I do not suggest its adoption here, but nevertheless we could effect a great improvement. I have previously spoken in this House on the cost to the dairyman of offal feed. The feed is supplied to him at a price which he cannot possibly afford on the net returns from the milk, having regard to the excessive cost of distribution. But if three or four out of six or seven milk carts were done away with, the price of milk could be very much reduced from its present figure. Allied to the milk question is that of water supply.

[Several interjections.]

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! If hon. members do not keep order, I shall have to enforce the rules. I will not speak again.

Capt. CARTER: I wish to say at the outset that the Government have acted very commendably in taking the initial step for the provision of an adequate water supply for the city of Perth. I accept this as a visible token of the interest which the Government show in the general politics of the country. It is high time that something was done for the metropolitan area in this respect. If the Minister for Works is right in the replies he has given—and I know he believes that what he predicts will come to pass—when the first steps towards an additional water supply will have been completed, in December next, instead of having three million gallons in the Mt. Hawthorn reservoir, we shall have 13 million gallons there. Further, it is promised that we shall have an up-to-date filtration plant available at Mt. Hawthorn. Another promise is that another ten million gallons, or thereabouts, will then have been added to the amount in the King's Park reservoir. If that comes about, it is possible, and indeed highly probable, that next summer the water supply will be very greatly improved. I know, and probably the Minister knows better than I do, that unless something is done quickly, before the summer arrives, in placing new mains on the higher levels, even the added supply of 20 million gallons will not suffice to pump the water into the houses on the higher levels; and for this reason—and the Minister knows it, his department having had enough difficulty in the matter—that the pipes in some of the areas are clogged up, or nearly so, with the accumulated sediment of many years. Ever since the bore water was allowed to run into our mains, we have had a tremendous quantity of what can only be described as filth pumped into the mains. That filth is still in the mains. I know that the department occasionally flush the mains. They have done it lately, and many inquiries have come my way as to whether the bad water has started again. Unless the Government are prepared to take out the smaller mains feeding the higher levels, the added weight of the water on Mt. Eliza and Mt. Hawthorn will not be a sufficient addition to furnish the supply of water necessary for household consumption. The Minister has told me that the Government have considered the question of laying new mains.

The Minister for Works: We are laying some of them now.

Capt. CARTER: I am glad to hear it. I wish to congratulate the Government on having taken such prompt action. It is necessary to discount the statements made from the opposite side—

Hon. T. Walker: "Opposite side" again.

Capt. CARTER: —that the people were led into this great project with their eyes closed. At the North Perth meeting the Premier, in expounding the water policy, fairly stated that the rate would have to be met by the people, and he named the rate. We know that this water supply is going to cost us a great deal of money. But we know that the

cost is inevitable. We know that the Government realise the need for improving the water supply.

The Minister for Works: We realised it in 1920, but we could not get the money.

Mr. Corboy: What rate was named by the Premier?

Capt. CARTER: Two shillings and ninepence. That is purely for the information of the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy). Everybody else knows it. Passing from that subject, I wish again to stress the urgent need for greater facilities in the settlement of industrial disputes. I believe that the present Arbitration Court is not capable of handling the whole of the business waiting on its files for hearing. We know that cases have been on the list of the Arbitration Court for 12 and 18 months. I will say very little more than that this does not make for industrial peace. It does not encourage faith in arbitration if an applicant, whether it be a union of employees or a union of employers, knows that a hearing cannot be obtained under such a time as that. My suggestion is that the Government should seriously consider the appointment of another court to act in co-operation with the present court. When last I heard, there were just on 40 cases in the Arbitration Court's list, and there will probably be a good many more before the court gets to work again after the big case which it has been handling for some time. After all, arbitration is the only satisfactory means of settling disputes, of keeping the wheels of industry going and of maintaining industrial peace; that goal, surely, is worthy of any expense the Government may have to undertake in the creation of an additional court. I agree with the suggestion that a commission should be appointed to inquire into the question of apprentices, and the general working of arbitration. It would be a good idea if we could have a thorough sifting of the evidence for and against the employment of an increased number of apprentices in industrial trades. The necessity for skilled men needs no stressing. Everybody knows there is a great scarcity of skilled men. Whether the blame lies with the employer or with the union, it is a crime against the young men of our State that we are not allowing them to become skilled artisans. Are they to become shopkeepers and labourers, or are we to give them a chance to make for themselves a niche in the manufacturing history of the world? We have all the elements of one of the greatest manufacturing countries the world has known, yet our secondary industries are practically silent. To-day we are actually importing articles, the raw material for which was grown by us and sent away to be manufactured and returned. In another place Mr. Mills had something to say about the Royal Commission on Soldier Settlement. Whether that hon. member is capable of forming an opinion on the subject, whether he even read the report of the Commission—

Mr. Corboy: It may be that, like the member for Toodyay, he did not read the report.

Capt. CARTER: That is so. It seems very much like it. However, he said that because the members of the Commission were not farmers, did not know bearded wheat from a bar of soap, the soldiers suffered from a lack of sympathy in the Commissioners. I have never seen a man work harder than did the chairman of that Commission, the member for Collie (Mr. A. A. Wilson). He sifted every avenue of evidence that could be adduced.

Mr. Johnston: All the Commissioners were most painstaking!

Capt. CARTER: For my part I gave my best services. Every member of the Commission did his best. It is nothing short of gratuitous insult for Mr. Mills to charge us with lack of sympathy for the soldiers. The appreciation shown by the Returned Soldiers' League on reading the report should be sufficient answer to Mr. Mills. If ever the Government be misguided enough to appoint him to a commission, I hope we in this Chamber will be more charitable to him than he really deserves. I should like to say a word about the price of meat in Perth. Every metropolitan member knows that the people of Perth are paying far too much for their meat. If we sell Wyndham beef in England, we can surely sell it in Perth, and if we can sell it at a low price in London, we ought to be able to sell at a low price in Perth. There is a lack of explanation as to why the meat is not brought to Perth, that we might benefit by the reduced price. It has been said that people will not eat frozen meat. From my experience in the army I can testify that there is good frozen meat as well as bad.

Mr. Marshall: What influence is at work to cause the high price here, as against the London price?

Capt. CARTER: I do not know. If the hon. member had enlightened us it might have had some good effect on the Government.

Mr. Marshall: I will make a note of it and enlighten you on some future occasion.

Capt. CARTER: I wish to touch upon the necessity for the application of the workers' homes scheme to Perth. I am not like those members who oppose the suggestion by saying there is no possibility of building a house to-day on the terms prescribed in the Act. I would go further than ask for the application of the scheme to Perth; I would have the advance increased to £750.

Mr. Davies: Do you think that would help the worker?

Capt. CARTER: Yes. If to-day he is to get a home worth anything, he has to pay a big rent for it. In the meantime what he pays in rent is lost to him. Under the workers' homes scheme, for the same rental he will get the home he wants, and every penny he pays in rent will benefit him, for the house will become his own. I think this admirable scheme should again be put into operation in Perth. I should like to close with congratulations to the member for West Perth (Mrs. Cowan) on the speech she made the other night. It came as a breath

of fresh air, as a gust of sane common-sense, after a lot of the tongue-in-cheek talk we had heard during the previous week or two. The very apt illustration she drew from the volume written in 1829 was strikingly appropos of the present position. We were told in that book that there were too many people coming to the colony; that their position was too hard; that they could not possibly make good, and that there was no land available. We saw the other side of the picture when the hon. member read a letter from her own grandmother, written in 1842, wherein that good lady told of the experiences she and her husband had had in pioneering 60 miles out in the bush amongst unfriendly blacks. When we realise how the pioneers have blazed the track, and what Australia is to-day as the result of their enterprising labours, we need have very little fear of the ultimate success of the Government's immigration scheme.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [8.40]: The conclusion of the speech of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat was about the best of all his long tirade to the Assembly to-night. I endorse all he has said in praise of the early pioneers, mere particularly the ancestors of the distinguished lady member of this Chamber. The only thing I have to regret about it is to see such manifest decadence, such fading away, as was evidenced by the speech delivered by the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter). I cannot believe that any of those early pioneers was lacking in logical perception as, by his speech, the hon. member appears to be. He makes a fierce attack upon anybody who endeavours to alter the present organisation of capital in the world and proposes a common ownership—State ownership—instead of private ownership, State utilities instead of private competition; and he concludes with a long appeal to the Government that the Government, or the deputies of the Government in the municipalities, shall take over the management of the milk supplies.

Capt. Carter: Did I say that?

Mr. Lutey: No, you only hinted it.

Hon. T. WALKER: You would not answer my question.

Capt. Carter: Try to be fair. You know I did not say it.

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not ask the hon. member to teach me fairness. I shall come to a bad school if I enter that of the hon. member. I know the hon. member would not answer my question when I asked "by whom authorised?" Repeatedly did I ask the question. Now I give the hon. member a chance to tell me who is to take charge of the receiving depôt.

Capt. Carter: I am not in the witness box.

Hon. T. WALKER: Of course not! Who is unfair now? Is it not only gentlemanly to courteously reply to an interrogation asking for information?

Capt. Carter: What right have you to interrogate me?

Hon. T. WALKER: Is it not only common fairness? The hon. member talks of unfairness, when he is so unfair as to evade a direct question put for the purpose of eliciting information. Where is the logic of the hon. member? What was his object in decrying Government ownership, and the restoration of private enterprise and private competition? Did he not urge that? But when it is a matter which affects some little street in his constituency, where there are six milk vendors when one could do the work, he is up in arms. He would straight away deprive five of them of their right to compete, and give the monopoly to one who himself should not have the right to do as he pleases, but should be compelled to attend at some receiving depôt governed either by a municipal or a government authority, and to serve only in a particular zone.

Hon. P. Collier: All this was after reading the speech of Sir Alfred Mond.

Hon. T. WALKER: After giving us a grand piece of eloquence as contained in a speech delivered in the House of Commons, he proceeds to deal with a little short street in Leederville containing six milk vendors.

Capt. Carter: You are putting up your own ninetails and knocking them down again.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am putting up no arguments with the desire to knock them down. The hon. member knocks down his own arguments. The pity is that the hon. member had not the sense to see it in the short speech he delivered.

Capt. Carter: Loud cheers!

Hon. T. WALKER: He completely answered himself.

Capt. Carter: That is genuine wit.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. WALKER: He answered himself not only in that matter, but by inference he gave us to understand that there should be supervisors appointed—by whom or who they would be we know not. These supervisors would see to it that the milk was properly bottled and corked so that the recipients could be sure of receiving the genuine article. And yet he would condemn this policy of municipalisation and of State control. Then again he concluded that the State should provide free tramway passes and railway passes.

Capt. Carter: I would not ask you for that?

Hon. T. WALKER: Why not? What is the insinuation now? What does the hon. member wish to convey? Is this another exhibition of his fairness?

Capt. Carter: What are you trying to convey?

Hon. T. WALKER: This pattern of exalted morality—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. WALKER: Is this the style of the hon. member's ethics?

Capt. Carter: Have you got to the point yet?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must keep quiet. He has had an opportunity of addressing the House.

Capt. Carter: I had better get out.

Hon. T. WALKER: I ask members to believe—

Capt. Carter: Look at them all sitting round you, about a dozen of them.

Hon. T. WALKER: I hope the hon. member will not pretend to be more of a clown sitting down than he was when standing up.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not be offensive.

Hon. T. WALKER: If those words are disorderly I will withdraw them. I was not sure that they were. The hon. member went further. He would have these passes granted by someone, not by private enterprise, but by the State. He is asking the State to do something. Just now he said he would not ask me to do that, but it is just that policy and that precisely, to which every member on this side of the House is pledged. We adopted that, but it is foreign to his policy. It does not fit in with it. It is our common plea, the everlasting aim and object of our existence, not only to make the railways ultimately free as a public utility to those who deserve so much from us because of the sufferings they have undergone in the service of this State and of the Empire, and the world at large, but for all. We regard the railways, not as a competitive profit-making concern, but as a utility for the service of the people. It gives that service to the people when it gives a free pass to returned soldiers. It is our policy, and it is the inconsistency of the hon. member to support it now. If he is true to the speech he read out to us as being his gospel, which produced so much applause, there can be no free passes to returned soldiers, there can be no State service or State utility to anybody, but he went further. He wants the Government to take especial charge quickly and speedily and wisely for the betterment of the water supply, a State concern. In the old days all water supplies were privately regulated and privately owned, but they have become State concerns, and he approves of them and pleads for their extension. Where is his consistency?

Hon. P. Collier: Where is Mond?

Hon. T. WALKER: Where is his sense of logic? I might give other instances of a like nature.

Hon. P. Collier: Such as workers' homes.

Hon. T. WALKER: Workers' homes—homes built by the Government for workers, above all; those toilers, those people who are so unpicturesque in the vision of the hon. member; those unholy people who have degenerated from the time of the grandmother of the member for West Perth. Why cannot the worker make his own home? Why cannot he do now what his forebears did, build his own home?

Hon. P. Collier: Exactly, build his own home.

Hon. T. WALKER: They had to build their own homes. Who started the policy? Who brought down the Bill to make workers' homes possible—the party the hon. member contemptuously designates as the other side,

the opposition, Beaufort-street? One can hardly under such circumstances seriously criticise the hon. member. One would feel that one was using force upon tissue paper and would make oneself ridiculous by doing so. I must say it made me feel that his words ought to call for some comment for his ungracious, ungentlemanly attack upon one who is no longer here to defend himself.

Hon. P. Collier: And he sneered at him.

Hon. T. WALKER: The gentleman is one who came here on the same level as every other member of the Overseas Delegation that was sent by the House of Commons to investigate the conditions here for the reception of migrants from the Home country. He endeavoured to belittle that man, and on what ground? He read his speech. I venture to think there is no member but approves of that speech, I do not care on what side of the House he sits. It was a carefully weighed expression of approval, not of condemnation of the work that was being done in this State for the relief of the Mother land. Let it not be forgotten, however, that the children of England are at this very moment coming to her assistance as valiantly and as loyally as they did when the bugles of war were sounding their loudest. As this moment they are helping the Mother country as valiantly, vigorously and loyally as it is possible for one nation to give a helping hand to another. As we know, England must relieve herself from the tragic condition of unemployment. True, that is not so tragic as it is in some parts of Europe. It is a painful scene to contemplate millions of people on the very verge of starvation, being fed almost from charity, right in the heart of that great historical nation, the Empress of the world. We need to help in relieving England of this pressure. We are, therefore, providing homes for settlers of the same race as England and ourselves; true, with the further object of building up our own State, but chiefly at England's request and upon her plea, and with her assistance we are taking from her those it is well she should be relieved of at the present juncture. That being so, how then can it be a reproach against an hon. member of the House of Commons who comes here and speaks on behalf of Labour, and of those who will leave England to come here and settle? Is it not a testimony to the man's big heart that he spoke as he did at that meeting?

Hon. P. Collier: That was his offence in the eyes of the member for Leederville; he was Labour.

Hon. T. WALKER: That shows how party can so colour and envenom the utterances of some people.

Mr. Richardson: The member for Leederville suffered a great deal for his Empire, did he not? Do not boom one man against another on such a score.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a poor old game.

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not think there can be any need for a comment of that kind.

Mr. Richardson: You raised the point.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have raised the point that the hon. member has belittled a member of the House of Commons, Mr. Wignall.

Mr. Richardson: That is a question.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is the only question I am considering at the moment. Therefore the interjection is entirely irrelevant.

Mr. Richardson: It is quite relevant.

Hon. T. WALKER: It has no relevancy whatever.

Hon. P. Collier: None at all.

Hon. T. WALKER: The member for Leederville was so poisoned by party prejudice that he made vice out of the very virtues of the man who was amongst us the other day. He sought to show that the man had had more concern for failure than success.

Mr. Richardson: Mr. Wignall said that.

Hon. P. Collier: Is he to be sneered at for that?

Hon. T. WALKER: Is that something for which we are to condemn Mr. Wignall?

Mr. Richardson: I am not condemning him.

Hon. T. WALKER: The member for Subiaco is too much of a man to condemn him on the facts presented, but there was not the same manhood or clearness of vision exhibited by the member for Leederville to see that the man, who had care and regard for the failures, had a bigger heart than the man who looked only to successes and forgot the failures. There is spirit, compassion and a sense of concern in the man who wants to know where the failures are, what caused them and how they might be cured. That is the work of a man. We can see successes everywhere and blind our eyes to misfortunes. We can call this the happiest of worlds if we never come into contact with the failures of humanity. The man who really wants to know what humanity is has to study the failures and go down to the sufferers.

Mr. Pickering: That is the big problem everywhere.

Hon. T. WALKER: Quite so. If we want to know the strength of a chain we look at its weakest link. That is the only way to get a grip of any question. Yet that is imputed to Mr. Wignall as an offence or at all events as a slight. Mr. Wignall called the Premier's scheme a great scheme and expressed his unbounded admiration of it, but he wants to know where the failures are and why they are caused and how they can be avoided. It was because he had the Labour stamp upon him that the member for Leederville condemned him.

Mr. Richardson: I think from what Mr. Wignall said that he will approve of the scheme.

Hon. T. WALKER: He has expressed approval of it from beginning to end, but what littleness there is in some people! For the hon. member's sufferings for the Empire, put him on a pedestal and I shall stand at the foot of it; but we are dealing with the speech he has delivered to-night. We are testing his logic; not his ability to shoot

straight. The member for Leederville quoted Mr. Wignall as saying that all the best of the land he had seen, referring to all the States, was fenced in and privately owned. This shows how little are the hon. member's critical powers.

Hon. P. Collier: That is so.

Mr. Richardson: He could not have seen all the land.

Hon. P. Collier: He spoke of what he had seen.

Hon. T. WALKER: What he said was absolutely true.

Mr. Richardson: But he had not seen it all.

Hon. T. WALKER: He said he had not seen it all. Why find fault with him?

Mr. Richardson: I am just pointing out that fact.

Hon. T. WALKER: No man has seen it all. One speaks of what one has seen, and he could speak only of what he had seen. But because Mr. Wignall said what was perfectly obvious and true, some inference as to partiality or incapacity is conveyed. Mr. Wignall may have gone further and said that all the land he had seen was privately owned or owned by the Government in such a way that it was hard to get at, and he may have been right. Much of it is privately owned; the rest is owned by the Government, but it is not easy to put a settler out at any spot the moment he arrives. Mr. Wignall was expressing the difficulty of settlement and it is a difficulty every member recognises. It is a difficulty recognised by the member for Subiaco. All Mr. Wignall did was to point out the difficulty in the way of speedy settlement, a thing which is pointed out night after night in this Chamber. But because he did it, it is mentioned as a terrible imputation against his character.

Hon. P. Collier: The member for Leederville must have been hard up for other matter.

Hon. T. WALKER: He must have been. But it only shows how the party spirit is capable of construing virtue into a fearful vice. That is a habit some people have, but it is not argument. I deemed it my duty to speak as I have done for an absent man whom I met and respected. I regarded him as a really good type of British stock. He had all the robustness, the health of merry England, all the common sense of a self-developed man, all the kindly heart of one that knew what the tenderest terms in the English language, such as "father" and "brother" mean. If we had more of his type sitting on the Government side, we would have more dignity—

Mr. Latham: We have a lot of dignity over here.

Hon. T. WALKER:—And fewer exhibitions of the kind witnessed to-night from the member for Leederville. I shall leave the hon. member; I do not think the rest of his speech deserves reference.

Mr. McCallum: What about the eradication of capital?

Hon. T. WALKER: To-day I asked the Premier if he had considered the amount of rainfall in that tract of country between Scaddan and Norseman. A little time ago a deputation waited on the Premier and urged that the railway line be continued from its present terminus to Norseman so as to link up the Esperance line with the rest of the railway system.

Mr. Harrison: A great pity it was not started from that point.

Hon. T. WALKER: I agree with the hon. member, but that was not my fault.

Mr. Harrison: Nor mine. The Minister for Works also endorsed it.

Hon. T. WALKER: In 1906 when Sir Newton Moore was Premier, there was a proposal to carry the line simply to Norseman, and I urged in a speech, which members can consult in "Hansard," that the line should then go right through to Esperance from Norseman. If that had been done, we should have averted a lot of later difficulties. When the Labour Government introduced the first Bill for a line touching Esperance, we proposed a line from Norseman to Esperance. It was not Labour's fault that the Bill was not carried. Labour approved of it, but the late Frank Wilson on the 19th December, 1911, said:—

If the object be, and I take it from the Minister's word that is his object, to give farmers who may settle in that district the goldfields market, why should we build the line to Esperance? Why should we build the line over 35 miles of poor sandy country as mentioned in the majority report and by the classifiers, Messrs. Hewby and May? Would it not be preferable to build say, 50 miles of railway from Norseman southward, tapping the mallee country and thus putting the settlers into touch with the goldfields market without incurring the enormous additional expense of going on to Esperance? But if the object be to encourage wheat exportation, and that is the only object to my mind that can justify the construction of this line, then we should build 60 miles of line and tap the mallee country east and west as recommended by the majority report of the Advisory Board.

We all remember that there were proposals to go right through from Norseman to Esperance. Frank Wilson suggested 60 miles from Esperance northwards, as his speech indicates. In the following year we reintroduced the Bill, and again the same contention was urged not to link up. Why not? Because it was feared that Adelaide would come into competition with Fremantle in the trade for the goldfields. That was the real reason. That fear had stood in the way for a long time. Surely that fear is gone now. I understand that the registrations of rainfall in the district between the terminus of the line and Norseman indicate that for a long way, if not right up to Norseman, the rainfall is sufficient for wheat growing purposes. So I am given to understand by the Premier. If that be true—and I can almost

assert positively it is true—then we have here an area for settlement that will relieve the Government of all their present difficulties in finding places to put the newcomers.

Mr. Davies: The Premier said he would give you the figures, did he not?

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes. We have the figures. But we have more than that; we have the evidence of the Minister for Agriculture himself. He has recently been in that district, and he is a practical farmer. He has seen the area in the gap referred to, and he is aware from the information he has obtained that it is not merely a straight line from Esperance to Norseman, but that an enormous belt of good wheat country extends from the survey of the line to the eastward, connecting up again with the good land in the west. All this is land easily cleared; land which would cost less money for settlement purposes than any other area in the State. A huge area of uniform country capable of producing wheat, this land, properly served by railway communication, would enable a settlement to take place greater than is possible in any other belt of country available in the whole of Western Australia.

Mr. Harrison: I suppose you remember that the Minister for Works said 90 miles could be built from Norseman south at a smaller cost than 60 miles from Esperance?

Hon. T. WALKER: Quite so. The work would have been cheaper if it had been done then. But it can be started from Norseman now to link up, so that the cost would not be so much. The point I am making, and for which I desire the sympathy of hon. members, because we may have to recur to it, is that we are already constructing that line as an agricultural proposition. It is no new thing, therefore, to extend the line. To make it a complete settlement line we must go up to Norseman. If we want to utilise that country which has been so glowingly described by the Minister for Agriculture, we must construct that line.

Mr. Johnston: Not to build the line would be a vote of want of confidence in the Minister for Agriculture.

Hon. T. WALKER: Quite so. It would show that the Minister is not fit to be trusted abroad.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you remember the days when the hon. member interjecting was a land agent in Kalgoorlie?

Hon. T. WALKER: I do, and I remember to his credit that he always advocated the construction of this line. Moreover, I want to say it is only fair to the Government that the line should be extended. Stopping where it does, the line could not be a profitable concern for many years to come. But if carried through to Norseman it will immediately pay expenses and return a profit. It is a business proposition, apart from an agricultural proposition and apart from the service of the numerous people who for so long have been settled in the district. As a business proposition, therefore, I commend the line to the Government's speedy consideration and action. We have not too great a burden of



legislation put down for consideration in this session, and well might the consideration of this proposal receive attention from the Chamber at no distant date. I want to say, too, that it is illogical to stop the line there while we have all our lines running to the northward. Just a few more miles, a small gap of some 60 miles, and then that great belt of country is linked up not only with the goldfields line but with the Great Western Railway.

Mr. Harrison: You cannot economically work 60 miles of isolated railway.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member is perfectly right. The line could not be run at a profit as it is. If the present position continues the railway will be damned, and the district blighted; the people who have trusted us long and waited so long will lose heart. Here is a country open and capable of speedy development with sure success, and there is not another stretch of country like it in Australia. In a business sense, therefore, it is the duty of the Government not to delay but to attend to the matter at once and give the House a chance of expressing an opinion on it at an early date.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [9.23]: The various subjects which are causing us some concern at the present time have been dealt with fairly extensively by the various speakers on the Address-in-reply, but there are one or two matters to which I desire to refer. May I, first of all, express the very great pleasure I felt in listening to the remarks of the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs). His address, I think, was one of the most reasonable we have had during this debate. It was particularly pleasant to hear from a member of the Country Party such remarks as the hon. member was good enough to make regarding the mining industry. I recollect that two or three years ago the Primary Producers' Association made serious efforts to get a footing in the mining industry. I hope you will not think, Mr. Speaker, that I am going to start on the Primary Producers' Association and Country Party Conference.

Mr. Latham: You are restricting yourself very properly.

Mr. CORBOY: Had the same sentiments swayed the members of the Primary Producers' Association executive as swayed the member for Wagin when speaking to-night, that association would have met with a good deal more success than they did achieve in the mining districts. It is obvious that something should be done to assist the industry that has done so much in building up the State. If we can get assistance from such members as the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs). I am satisfied that something will be achieved.

Mr. Latham: You get a lot of assistance from the Minister for Mines.

Mr. CORBOY: Personally I do not altogether class the Minister for Mines as a member of the Country Party or of any other party in this House.

Mr. Latham: We do.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CORBOY: The Country Party have him to-day; we may have him the next day; and Heaven knows who will have him the day after. That is the position as regards the Minister for Mines. I do not say that the Minister has not done what he thought was in the best interests of the mining industry. I acknowledge that on numerous occasions when I have been to him with requests he has granted them. However, I do not know that that fact reflects any great credit upon the Country Party.

Mr. Latham: It does.

Mr. CORBOY: Whilst I listened with a great deal of pleasure to the remarks of the member for Wagin, I experienced something of the opposite feeling in listening to those of the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter). I do not intend to follow the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) in going through the speech of the member for Leederville, but it struck me as somewhat peculiar that the member for Leederville should condemn a member of another place for a "gratuitous insult" to this Chamber, and then proceed to characterise most of the speeches delivered here during the past fortnight as having been uttered by members with their tongues in their cheeks. If that is not an insult to almost every member who has spoken on the Address-in-reply so far, I do not know what it is. I desire to follow briefly the remarks made by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) regarding false answers to questions asked by members of this Chamber. Personally, I have been very dissatisfied with answers to questions put up by me. I am quite convinced that, as was stated the other night, some departmental officers are regarding it as a duty to put up such answers to questions for Ministers as will not give the information asked for, and will in many cases leave a nasty sting behind. I have in mind particularly a question which I asked the Treasurer regarding the interest on the sum involved in the Ravensthorpe Smelter case. The desired information was not given in the reply which the Premier furnished. That reply was so framed as apparently to answer the question, but without disclosing anything.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is the art.

Mr. Johnston: Some of the artists ought to be turned out.

Mr. CORBOY: Of course they should. Only last Wednesday the member for Brownhill-Ivanhoe (Mr. Lutey) asked a question of the Minister for Mines with reference to the Miners' Phthisis Act passed last session. The question was quite plain—

Has the Bill relating to Miners' Phthisis been assented to?

There is no ambiguity whatever about that question. The Minister's reply was equally plain, "No." I have before me the volume of the statutes of the past session, and the Miners' Phthisis Act, No. 16 of 1923, is represented as having been assented to on the 22nd of February,

1923. I do not personally think that the Minister for Mines deliberately misled the House in his reply. We all know that questions asked here upon notice are passed to the departmental heads for the framing of answers. In this particular case the reply put up was that the measure had not been assented to. That is a deliberate falsehood, or else this copy of the Statutes is wrongly printed.

The Colonial Secretary: The member asking the question must have been aware of the position.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not know what was in the mind of the hon. member, but it struck me at the time that that answer was deliberately false.

The Colonial Secretary: They evidently both made mistakes.

Mr. CORBOY: I am satisfied there is no question of mistake entering into the matter at all. The case is not usually so glaring as in this instance, but I am satisfied that members here have a right to express their disapproval of the circumstance that departmental officers apparently assume it to be their duty to refrain from giving information to members.

Mr. Pickering: Those officers are smart.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not consider it smart to mislead members who are sent here to represent the people, and who are legitimately entitled to obtain information. In this particular case I am satisfied that the answer was not put up in that misleading way by the Minister. There is, I think, an explanation. The Minister would have in mind the fact that the measure had not yet been proclaimed and put in operation. But the question was whether the measure had been assented to, and the answer to that question was "No." As I have said, however, the printed copy of the statutes states that it was assented to on the 22nd February, 1923.

The Minister for Mines: You are quite right in that. There was a typographical error.

Mr. Hughes: Does the Minister accept the responsibility?

The Minister for Mines: The hon. member really wanted to know whether the Act had been proclaimed.

Mr. CORBOY: No, the question was plain. In this case it was obviously a foolish falsehood.

The Colonial Secretary: No, it was an error.

Mr. CORBOY: The Minister can have it that way if he likes. There have been numerous instances, however, of information being deliberately withheld, or questions answered in a way that does not meet with the approval of members. Something should be done to stop that sort of thing. The position regarding miners' complaint should be remedied. Last session's measure was not contingent upon the establishment of a Federal Laboratory in Kalgoorlie. I cannot believe that the Minister for Mines, or the Government as a whole, have refrained from giving effect to that legislation in order to leave the

field as intact as possible for Federal investigation. That would be a cruel thing to do. We have not had any real explanation of the delay in putting the Act into operation. The Minister himself has worked on the Golden Mile and I am sure he feels as keenly for those men suffering from miners' phthisis as we all do. I hope he will make a move soon to put the Act in operation. If he does not think the legislation will do any good, let him tell us what is the real position, and suggest what should be done.

The Minister for Mines: Your statement is quite as much in error as the answer to the question you have mentioned.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not see that.

The Minister for Mines: The information was given distinctly to the whole House. I said, when speaking on the Bill, that it would not be proclaimed until the Federal Government had established the laboratory.

Mr. CORBOY: I must have missed that. Had I noted the remark at the time, I would have protested, because it is almost criminal for us to stand aside and do nothing, merely because the Federal Government have not done something else. We can surely do something.

The Minister for Mines: We will do our part.

Mr. CORBOY: I would like to see the Minister do that, irrespective of what the Federal authorities do. We should not wait for them to act.

The Minister for Mines: We are not waiting.

Mr. CORBOY: The Minister is more acquainted with the position than I am, and I hope he will make it clear when he speaks on the Address-in-reply. I do not want it to be thought, exactly, that I am critical, for I want to be helpful. I want to know what is the intention of the Government. The House is unanimous in its desire to do something for those affected. This is no party question, with criticism merely because John Seaddan happens to be Minister for Mines. I hope the Minister will be able to show some tangible results of his efforts. As to the mining industry generally, the present Administration is not altogether satisfactory. I do not contend that the Minister for Mines, or his department, is at fault, but rather that the responsibility rests with the Premier and the party sitting behind the Government. The industry is going through what, in all probability, is the most difficult period in the history of Western Australian mining. It has been confronted with all sorts of conditions which have militated against success. It has had to contend with many things it was almost impossible for the industry to deal with, and yet we find merely four lines in the Governor's Speech regarding this industry. Those four lines are in the usual optimistic style of the Premier, who remarked that prospecting was proceeding actively and that everything in the garden was lovely. The Minister for Mines knows that everything in the garden is not lovely. During the last few days he has

been at Kalgoorlie endeavouring to do what is possible to secure better returns for the industry. The Government should have more definite plans than have been indicated so far. The prospecting parties sent out by the Minister have been somewhat successful. They should be continued, but the sending out of State-aided prospecting parties should not be the beginning and end of the State assistance to mining. I believe something will be done, for the elections are close at hand and the Minister is becoming active regarding reductions in the cost of water supplies. There should be some more definite pronouncement as to the Government's intentions than is contained in the four lines in the Governor's Speech. A Government who are unable to see past a sheaf of wheat will not administer the country in the best interests of the State as a whole. Get away from wheat and land settlement and we find that the Government are devoid of a policy.

The Colonial Secretary: Just now you congratulated the Minister for Mines on what he has done for mining.

Mr. CORBOY: As head of the department, he is doing what he thinks is in the best interests of the industry; he is not merely talking about it. The Government, as a Government, and the Premier in particular, are displaying a lamentable lack of interest in the mining industry.

The Minister for Mines: The Premier went to Coolgardie with the member for the district recently.

Mr. CORBOY: He went to look at cotton. The Minister for Mines: No fear! He went over a number of mining propositions.

Mr. CORBOY: That is so. The Minister knows that on the Premier's return from Coolgardie he expressed astonishment at the type of people residing on the fields.

The Minister for Mines: He has been judging them by their Parliamentary representatives.

Mr. CORBOY: The Minister was one of the first mining representatives and I am not surprised that the Premier gained a wrong impression. Apart from the Redistribution of Seats Bill—

Mr. Mullany: Hush! That is taboo!

Mr. CORBOY: In common with you, Mr. Speaker, and the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany), I am the representative of one of the constituencies to be blotted out. Apart from that Bill, the Governor's Speech contains reference to no measures of vast importance for this session. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) would say that we have enough legislation and we should get down to administration. That would be all right if the Government were satisfied with the existing Acts and had proceeded to administer them properly. I am not satisfied with the present administration of the State's affairs. The investigations of the Soldier Settlement Commission convinced me that there could be a lot of tightening up in administration in various directions. The policy of the Government is mainly land settlement,

and we dealt with the application of that policy as it affected the soldier settlers. We found that the administration could have been a great deal better. None of us is infallible and there must be mistakes. Some of the mistakes in connection with the soldier settlement scheme pointed to incompetence in high quarters. I would like to see the Government concentrate upon doing their job properly. Formerly we had eight Ministers, and I have been informed by one Minister that in those days they were kept well up to the collar and kept busy. To-day, with a huge immigration scheme, and various other activities that make more work for Ministers, we find that six Ministers are coping with the task, and that it is always possible to get one of them to open a hall in some distant part. It would appear that with fewer Ministers controlling the position, the same personal control and attention to the administration of the various offices cannot be obtained nowadays. Without proper Ministerial control, laxity in administration and in the work of departments, with consequent waste of public moneys, are to be noted. This must be so unless Ministers look after their jobs properly. The results of the present methods were seen in connection with the soldier settlement scheme. Money has been wasted, and there was not that attention given to the affairs of the department, from the Minister down, that was necessary to see that this position was not allowed to continue. The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) caused some amusement when he informed members that he had seen logs with many holes bored in them for blasting purposes, and yet he could have lifted those logs and carried them to the fires. I am not as strong as that hon. member, but I saw one log in particular at Balingup with nine holes in it that I could have carried easily. There were innumerable instances of waste to which our attention was drawn. As to immigration, I stand for it. The Labour Party as a whole stands for it, and definite statements to that effect have been made by members holding responsible positions in connection with the movement. Just as definitely, I state I will not sit quietly by and permit it to be inferred that the present scheme carries my endorsement. It does not. I recognise that we must have a greater number of white people here if we are to retain and develop the country. The Government are bringing people here and the scheme involves an enormous expenditure. Having incurred that expenditure, the Government make no effort to retain the population at present here nor yet to retain the migrants themselves. The statistician's figures disclose that we are not gaining in population proportionately to the number of migrants arriving. While the Government are concentrating on a scheme to bring people to this country, they are neglecting the conservation of the people already here. It is useless spending money on immigration if we do not make it possible for our own people to remain with us. There are all those who have had to

get out of the mining industry as a result of the bad times the industry has passed through. What has become of them? The bulk of them have found that the Eastern States offer them greater opportunities than we can, and so they have left us. We should be able to show them good reasons for their remaining in the State. If we cannot do that for our own people, we cannot show the migrant a good reason for his coming here. If the country be not good enough for our own people to stay in, it is not good enough to bring people to at enormous cost. I wish to reiterate something I have previously said in respect to the placing of settlers when they arrive. The whole responsibility for placing the settler and looking after him should rest with the Government. It is wrong that they should hand it to an irresponsible body. Nobody can claim that the New Settlers' League is not irresponsible. We should not have the so-called drives, men going round the country in motor cars begging farmers to take new arrivals.

Mr. Johnston: It displays a fine public spirit on the part of the League.

Mr. CORBOY: I am not condemning the New Settlers' League. They are doing their best in what they regard as a duty to the State; but I say the work should not be placed in the hands of those men, that it is a Government responsibility.

The Minister for Mines: They are doing the work well.

Mr. CORBOY: We have heard of isolated complaints. There is developing to-day a very general complaint that the work of the New Settlers' League in this respect does not tend to the best interests of the migrants or of the immigration scheme.

Mr. Johnston: In what direction?

Mr. CORBOY: I have heard it definitely stated that migrants have been placed by the League and shortly afterwards, when another batch of new settlers arrive, the League officials appeal to the employer of the first migrant to take another in his place. "He has been with you for a time," they say, "and he can now look after himself while you take somebody else."

Mr. Pickering: Can you give evidence of that?

Mr. CORBOY: So general has been the complaint that I do not expect any difficulty in getting the evidence. I have had the complaint from a number.

Mr. Pickering: If you can verify that statement, the official of the New Settlers' League will be dismissed.

Mr. CORBOY: I believe the hon. member is a member of that League, and I will endeavour to get the proof for him.

Mr. Marshall: Certainly he has all the qualifications for membership of the League.

The Minister for Mines: Why make an unnecessary observation, such as that?

Mr. Pickering: The Minister has nothing to write home about.

Mr. CORBOY: I hope the Government will accept the whole responsibility for their

scheme, and not rest content with dumping migrants into the State and leaving it to somebody else to fessick for them. The country is capable of absorbing migrants at a fairly fast rate, if only the Government would handle the job properly and not pass it over to outside organisations.

The Minister for Mines: I think the New Settlers' League can handle it better than we can.

Mr. CORBOY: Because they are doing it more cheaply than you can.

The Minister for Mines: Well, that means saving money to the State and to the taxpayer. If it be done satisfactorily, what is wrong with it?

Mr. CORBOY: But it is not being done satisfactorily.

Mr. Hughes: Why not hand over the Mines Department to the New Settlers' League? It would save salaries.

Mr. Johnston: That is getting too close home.

Mr. CORBOY: The position of the group settlement scheme was causing me a little concern; indeed it still is. The investigations of the Soldier Settlement Commission convinced me that there is doubt as to what will be the ultimate result of group settlement under the present scheme. By that, I do not wish it to be understood that I do not think settlers can succeed in the South-West; I believe they can.

Mr. Pickering: They have succeeded.

Mr. CORBOY: And I believe they will succeed in the future. But I believe also that under the method adopted by the Premier in group settlement, the capital cost of the holdings will be so high that without very careful nursing it will be difficult indeed for many of the settlers to carry on. Of course we shall have an occasional man of extra resource and ability who will get through under any difficulty; but, taking the average man on the group settlements, I very much fear we shall have a position similar to that which arose in soldier settlement, namely, that a very great writing down of the liability will be necessary to enable the settler to carry on.

Mr. Pickering: The Government have the experience of soldier settlement to guide them.

Mr. CORBOY: I had intended to refer to the total clearing done on each of the blocks, but the Premier has informed me that he has stopped total clearing altogether.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It has been stopped for some time.

Mr. CORBOY: Wherever we went in the South-West amongst men of experience we got definite evidence that the system of total clearing was not profitable, at least not down there. Partial clearing was recommended by those having any knowledge of the South-West. The Premier informs me that is the system in operation to-day. I think it will give the settlers a very much better chance of getting through. The country is all right, and with proper assistance, with the establishment of butter factories at convenient points, and the introduction of the right

type of milk producing cattle, we shall have a successful scheme. Even then I fear a great deal of writing off will be necessary to bring the capital cost within the productive possibilities of the block.

Mr. Pickering: I do not think so, if the lines you suggest are followed.

Mr. CORBOY: It must be remembered that a great many were settled under the old system of total clearing. In nearly every one of those instances it will be necessary to do some writing down. If that prove to be the case, I hope the Government will face it boldly and not try, as in soldier settlement, to move the man off the block because he cannot pay, and give the block to another at the reduced price. That has happened to soldier settlers.

Mr. Johnston: And to others, pioneers, too.

Mr. CORBOY: If we are to write down, let us do it for the fellow who has put in the original battling. I wish to refer to one or two matters in connection with finance. It is degrading to find newspapers which set themselves up as guides for the people, as store-houses of information, yet allow party spleen to so influence them that they condemn in one party what they are almost ready to applaud in another. We all remember that when the Minister for Mines was Premier the "West Australian" hammered day after day the fact that we were "gone a million," and pointed out that the State was rushing to the brink of disaster. What is the position to-day?

The Minister for Mines: There has been an earthquake since then.

Mr. CORBOY: And it deposited the hon. member amongst those to whom he had previously sat opposite. But not even that fact was sufficient to turn the six million deficit of to-day into something to keep silent about, while the million deficit was something to howl about all night. What did the "West Australian" say when we on this side dared to draw attention to the six million deficit? That authority told us we were damaging the credit of the State, and were disloyal. That journal which held up the ex-Premier to ridicule because he had gone back a million, says to-day we are disloyal if we draw attention to the fact that the present Government have gone back six millions. When a paper which sets itself up as an instructor of the people will go so far as the "West Australian" has gone in flattering the present Premier, it is not worthy of being used for wrapping up meat. The position should cause us very serious concern. I have already drawn attention to the fact that our population is not increasing as it should be, having regard to the number of migrants. Another factor which causes me grave concern is that our expenditure is going up by leaps and bounds, while we are not getting sufficient people to hear it. The Premier, from 1919 to 1923, spent in his deficit and loans over and above revenue over twelve millions more than the revenue produced. He has gone back twelve millions, while the population has increased by only 26,000.

Mr. Johnston: You do not include the profitable expenditure of loan moneys, surely?

Mr. CORBOY: It does not matter whether the money is profitably spent or not. The fact that we are spending money at that rate should be compensated by a proportionate gain in population. Another fact that is causing me some concern is that we are not increasing as we should do the area under crop.

The Minister for Agriculture: Nonsense!

Mr. CORBOY: It is just as easy for the Minister to say that now as it was for the Premier to say "nonsense" when the Labour Government wanted to open up a new province.

The Minister for Agriculture: Are you coming back to the record crop during the Labour régime in 1915?

Mr. CORBOY: During the last year of the Labour Government, when we were in the throes of war, and many of our primary producers were away with the Army, we had a greater area under crop than we had last year.

The Minister for Agriculture: Not because we had a Labour Government.

Mr. CORBOY: It does not matter what Government was in office. The area under crop decreased in the years following.

The Minister for Agriculture: What would be the special reason for that large area being under crop?

Mr. Hughes: A progressive administration.

Mr. CORBOY: Seeing that many of our primary producers were away from the State and it was yet possible for those left behind to put in that large area of crop, there must be something wrong with last year.

The Minister for Agriculture: There was also a greater area under crop in the other States.

Mr. CORBOY: Those States are not landing immigrants and spending money on primary production at the rate we are doing. We are supposed to be doing something in that direction, but instead of making progress we are going back. The same thing applies to stock. Between 1918 and 1922 there was a big decrease in the number of sheep, cattle, horses and pigs.

Mr. Stubbs: The droughts were responsible for that.

Mr. CORBOY: They may have been responsible for some of the decrease, but not all.

Mr. Latham: Droughts are responsible for a reduction in the number of stock, and better farming methods are responsible for the smaller area under cultivation. There is more fallow.

Mr. CORBOY: That does not account for the drop in the area under cultivation.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is accountable more from the fact that a large area of land went back towards its original condition, because there was no one to keep up the improvements.

Mr. CORBOY: It is ridiculous to make that assertion seeing that in 1916, when most

of our men were away, we experienced a particularly good year.

The Minister for Agriculture: That was the crop put in in 1915, the year after the war.

Mr. Johnston: And the farmers had a guaranteed price for their wheat.

Mr. CORBOY: In view of the large expenditure in assisting the establishment of primary production, and putting men on the land, we should be showing better results.

The Minister for Mines: The growth of wheat is not entirely primary production. What about the increases in our herds and our wool production?

Mr. CORBOY: There has been a reduction in our herds.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is the reason for that?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The farmers were working on Government money in 1916.

Mr. Harrison: And they were putting in all the land they could without fallowing.

Mr. CORBOY: The Government have been spending large sums of money on primary production. The indebtedness per head has increased by no less than £17 in the three years 1918 to 1922.

Mr. Latham: Quote the value of the production in those years.

Mr. CORBOY: That is not a true indication of the position. In the case of wheat we may get a greater amount of money without getting a greater quantity.

Mr. Latham: It was 4s. 4d. a bushel last year.

Mr. CORBOY: Farmers can get values without getting the quantity.

The Minister for Agriculture: What is your contention?

Mr. CORBOY: The Government have spent twelve million pounds over and above the revenue, and have spent the bulk of this in endeavouring to foster a primary industry, and in bringing migrants here. Despite that fact our population is not increasing at the rate it should, and our area under cultivation has also not increased.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, it has.

Mr. CORBOY: Neither are our herds increasing. We should be getting better results for our money.

The Minister for Agriculture: We should have got better results last year but for the short season. We have no control over the seasons.

Mr. CORBOY: No. We should get a definite announcement from the Ministry as to whether it is wise to continue to spend money at the present rate, and increase the indebtedness per head by over £5 per annum, without any tangible return for the outlay. I hope some more definite results will be obtained directly than has been the case in the past. With regard to insurance, members will recollect that at the first session of this Parliament I brought forward a motion recommending the advisableness of establishing a State insurance office to cover all form of insurance. I believe the Minister for Mines promised

that inquiries would be made, but so far we have heard nothing. A good deal can be done in helping various people to better their position if the State will take on insurance work similar to the Queensland scheme. Queensland is benefiting in many directions as a result of this scheme. I will quote some of the things which have been brought about there:—

The resultant competition for business forced reductions in premiums ranging from 20 to 33 per cent., which means a saving of £200,000 per annum to the insuring public. Fire insurance on dwellings which previously cost 9s., now costs 6s., and that on business risks, which formerly cost the insurer 90s., may now be had for 72s.

Mr. Johnston: Is that per £100?

Mr. CORBOY: Yes.

Mr. Johnston: It seems high compared with what we pay here.

Mr. CORBOY: Business risks cover a multitude of things. The article from which I am quoting continues—

Life insurance rates have also decreased by 25 per cent. Despite these reductions in premiums the State insurance office has shown a profit averaging £50,000 per year, and the total profit since the inception of the office to June 1922, amounted to £298,446.

This means a great deal, not only for the working public who pay on their dwellings and small insurance policies, but also to business people. There is a feature about it that appeals to me a great deal more than anything else, and that is the Workers' Compensation clause of the scheme. This deals with occupational diseases. I appeal to members to read the remarks of Dr. Mitchell, of the Woolloomoo Sanatorium, on the subject of tuberculosis. He makes a strong plea for some definite methods in regard to miners' complaint. He says it is not a matter of party politics or anything of that sort; that it is something in which all can help. A proper scheme of workers' compensation covering occupational diseases and administered by a State insurance office would enable us to do a great deal more for these sufferers than we are able to do with the Mine Workers' Relief Fund.

Mr. Stubbs: Should not the workers contribute a little towards that fund?

Mr. CORBOY: They do contribute. I want to see the whole thing placed on a proper business footing under the control of a State insurance office so that men in the industry will get the full benefit of that which they contribute and that proper provision may be made for them instead of their receiving merely a miserable pittance. The article upon insurance says—

Successful as have been the operations of the State insurance office in fire, marine and life insurance, a perusal of the record of the office in connection with workers' compensation brings home most strikingly how the workers of the State have been advantaged by State insurance. The State

office has a monopoly of this class of insurance, with the result that it pays up to £2 a week to single men and up to £3 10s. a week to married men during the time lost through accident. Previously the insurance companies paid £1 per week. The compensation for a totally disabled person has been increased from £400 to £750 and the amount payable in case of death has been raised from £400 (paid by private companies) to £600. During the year ended June, 1922, the sum of £221,000 was paid to injured workers.

There is another portion of this article I would like to quote, dealing with workers' compensation. It reads:—

In this respect, figures issued by the State Government are illuminating. Prior to the State taking over a monopoly of workmen's compensation insurance, of every £100 received in premiums by the insurance companies, only £34 was paid to injured workers as compensation. The remaining £66 went to shareholders in dividends or was absorbed in expenses as a result of the cut-throat competition for business then operating. To-day the State office paid away in claims £83 for every £100 received in premiums, so that the working expenses are only £17. The State office has thus taken the money wasted in competition or absorbed in profits by the greedy insurance companies and paid it to injured workers.

Mr. Johnston: Have not they a monopoly of that class of business?

Mr. CORBOY: Yes, they have a monopoly of workmen's compensation and have been able to reduce the expenses to a very great extent, giving the worker the benefit of the saving. To-day he gets £83 out of every £100 collected, whereas previously he received only £34. Because of that saving, they can pay £3 10s. to a married man as against £1 previously.

Mr. Stubbs: Do they contribute towards that fund?

Mr. CORBOY: The employees in Queensland do not contribute. It is practically a tax on industry.

The Minister for Mines: The employer pays it.

Mr. CORBOY: In Queensland workers' compensation has been made a tax on industry. That is the proper body to bear the charge.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government fund here has grown so high that they do not know what to do with the money.

Mr. CORBOY: When I moved my motion in the House I quoted the Government workers' scheme and showed that the Government, up to two years ago, had saved £49,000 that they would otherwise have paid to private companies. I wish now to deal with one or two matters affecting my own electorate or what is temporarily my electorate.

Mr. Stubbs: I am to receive portion of your electorate.

Mr. CORBOY: But the portion the hon. member will inherit is uninhabited.

The Minister for Mines: Then it is comparable with the new electorate of Karra-katta.

Mr. CORBOY: Hardly so, because if one could get the whole of the votes of the people down there, one would win pretty easily. Statements have been made that there is a paucity of wheat lands on which the Agricultural Bank will make advances. People have complained that, after the Lands Department have made blocks available, the Agricultural Bank authorities have refused to advance against them, because they did not regard the blocks as offering sufficiently good security. Possibly the question of cost governs the position, but I would like to know from the Government whether it is not possible to inform people when they go to the Lands Department precisely what the position is regarding an Agricultural Bank advance.

The Minister for Agriculture. It is always specified.

Mr. CORBOY: I defy the Minister to prove that. One may go to the Lands Department to-morrow and take up wheat land and the Agricultural Bank will refuse an advance.

The Minister for Agriculture: In most cases the person taking up land is told that specifically.

Mr. CORBOY: There have been complaints that unless people take up such land, there is no other land available. The Government have embarked on an experiment in the Southern Cross-Bullfinch area. The Minister for Mines, accompanied by Mr. McLarty and myself, went right through that country last year and I think he was favourably impressed. Since then the Government have thrown open a big area of that land on a basis of 50 per cent. advance from the Agricultural Bank. Many very fine men have gone up there, and some of the best have had to leave the district because they could not make a success of it on the 50 per cent. advance. One man was getting only 7s. 6d. per acre on the 50 per cent. basis and, as he had a family of nine children, he found it impossible to carry on. I have a suggestion which I hope will receive serious consideration, namely, that the Government should grant the full advance of 30s. per acre for clearing for the first 200 acres. If this were done settlers would be able to get a crop in. If the Government did not then see fit to continue the 100 per cent. basis, they could reduce the advance to 50 per cent. I hope the Minister will earnestly consider this proposal, because I think investigation will show that it is possible to grant this concession. Judging from conversations with Mr. McLarty, I conclude that he is favourably impressed with the district, but the other two trustees of the bank, who have not inspected the work done there during recent years, are proving a stumbling block. If those in authority devoted a little more earnest consideration to the matter, there would be greater chances of making a success of the settlement. Some of the men who have gone there in the

last few years have done extremely well. There were a group of six soldier settlers whom the Minister for Mines met. One of them has no less than 150 acres under crop this year, and a number of others are doing remarkably well. If proper consideration is given to my proposal, the outlook for these settlers will be very much brighter.

On motion by Mr. Davies, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.24 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 22nd August, 1923.*

|                             |     |     |     |      |
|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Address-in-reply, tenth day | ... | ... | ... | PAGE |
|                             |     |     |     | 375  |

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Tenth Day.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (South-West) [4.35]: It had been my intention to congratulate Mr. Ewing upon his elevation to Cabinet rank, but after hearing Mr. Holmes yesterday I am not sure that instead of congratulations he does not need sympathy. However much the Leader of the House may wish to carry out his ideals, which, no doubt, are the same now as they were in the past, he is only one of six, and will have to do the best he can with the brutal majority against him. I had the honour of being in Cabinet for a good many years. I was always very outspoken regarding State trading concerns, for instance. I was Honorary Minister for Agriculture, and was called upon to deal with some of the trading concerns. It was with great pleasure I was able to wipe out the fish-selling business and the meat-selling business. Had I had the management of the other trading concerns, no doubt I would have found means of doing the same thing with them.

Hon. V. Hamersley: You did that without any Act of Parliament.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes. I obtained legal opinion. I do not know whether the present legal advisers of the Government

tender advice that is not so good as it was in the past. The fact remains I managed to drive a coach and four through the Act when I wanted to, and drove it to some purpose. I hope the Leader of the House will use all the influence he has with his colleagues to see whether something cannot be done with these trading concerns. I have always held they are wrong in principle. There may be times when the Government should step in, as for instance in the early day of the goldfields between Esperance and Coolgardie. The owners of the water condensers skied the price of water to such an extent that it was almost better to die of thirst than to buy it. The Government then installed condensers and policed that district, and brought down the price to a reasonable figure. They warned the pirates that if they did not in future conduct their business in a reasonable manner they would again be undersold. Private enterprise, however, kept going and did the trade. The Government condensers did very little more than supply departmental officers travelling up and down. They fulfilled the necessary function, however. We were told that the other State trading concerns were going to do exactly that and no more.

Hon. J. Cornell: Evidently the Government condensers did not join the combine.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I am coming to that. We started sawmills because it was thought the people were being penalised through the price charged for sleepers for the Railway Department. The Liberal Government erected a sawmill in order to obtain sleepers for that department.

Hon. T. Moore: And a good one too.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes, but it was the wrong way to go about it. There was another way without starting sawmills of getting railway sleepers at a fair price. The forests belonged to the State, and by regulation the royalty could be altered from time to time. I said to the Premier of the day, "Do not start sawmills; you have the situation in the hollow of your hand by your forestry regulations. You can make these people supply you with sleepers at a fair price and can state the number that each firm shall supply."

Hon. J. Duffell: You are not a believer in price fixing are you?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I believe in a fair deal for all. The Government could have ensured a certain number of sleepers annually at a fair price. This would have been much better than starting the ball rolling and arriving at our present position. When the Labour Party came into office, believing as they did in State trading, they embarked in the timber industry in a large way. Did they police the industry in order to stop the octopuses from grabbing big prices from people who wanted timber? On the contrary, the price of fruit cases went up 50 per cent. as soon as the Government entered into the saw-milling business, and it has never come down.

Hon. T. Moore: Are the other people supplying cases at a lower rate?